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## TRADITIONAL TEXTS OF "GEORDIE" IN AMERICA

by

Tristram P. Coffin

Ever since H. M. Belden noted<sup>1</sup> that his Missouri text of "Geordie" (Child 209) was a descendant of the late seventeenth century broadside "The Life and Death of George of Oxford," it has been generally accepted that American versions and variants of this song derive from black-letter pieces<sup>2</sup> in the main and resemble either the 1823 *Green Mountain Songster* version<sup>3</sup> or one of the Pitts, Such, or Catnach nineteenth century London stall copies.<sup>4</sup> Songs of this sort, many of which have a certain number of lines that have never been traced to any source (traditional or printed),<sup>5</sup> generally omit the ransom motif and have the hero condemned for stealing the king's horses (or deer) and selling them in Bohemia. The Vermont ballad and a Pennsylvania variant<sup>6</sup> end with the hero's release. Most texts, however, see the hero hung by means of a silken cord or golden chain. Moreover, no New World text has been recognized to be related to Child A-E, "the purer forms of the ballad,"<sup>7</sup> to any significant degree.

Upon careful inspection of the published variants of Child 209 it becomes evident that scholarship on the American "Geordie" has not taken into full account the two texts<sup>8</sup> that I wish to discuss here. One was taken from an Emma

<sup>1</sup> See the *Journal of American Folklore*, XX, 319.

<sup>2</sup> See Arthur K. Davis, *Traditional Ballads of Virginia*, 435; Belden, *Missouri Folk songs* (*University of Missouri Studies*, XV), 76; and the letter from Phillips Barry quoted by Mellinger Henry, *Folk Songs from the Southern Highlands*, 142.

<sup>3</sup> A rare pamphlet published at Sandgate, Vt., from songs known to a Revolutionary soldier. The collection is now at the Dartmouth College Library.

<sup>4</sup> In addition to the references given in Vance Randolph, *Ozark Folk Songs*, I, 161, see John Harrington Cox, *Folk Songs of the South*, 135 and Helen H. Flanders, *Vermont Folk Songs and Ballads*, 241 (the *Green Mountain Songster* text).

<sup>5</sup> See Davis, *loc. cit.*, on this point.

<sup>6</sup> See Henry W. Shoemaker, *Mountain Minstrelsy*, 162.

<sup>7</sup> Francis J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (5 vols.), IV, 124.

<sup>8</sup> Randolph, *op. cit.*, 162 (No. 28C, ("George E. Wedlock") and Dorothy Scarborough, *Songcatcher in the Southern Mountains*, 213 ("Georgie-O"). The Scarborough text is also printed by Susannah Wetmore, *Mountain Songs of North Carolina*, 13.

Dusenbury of Mena, Arkansas, in 1930 and was again recorded from her by John A. Lomax and Laurence Powell in 1936.<sup>9</sup> The other was taken from a Mrs. James G. Stikeleather of Asheville, North Carolina, in 1924. Although they have gone unrecognized as such, these two songs are certainly New World survivals of the traditional form of "Geordie," and are related in but a minor way to the black-letter pieces. They seem to me the most significant finds in the American history of this old ballad.

The Dusenbury text holds the key to the matter, for the Stikeleather song alone would not offer enough evidence to establish its identity. Thus, the case can best be proved by studying the Arkansas ballad in comparison with the Child texts and then treating the North Carolina song in relation to the evidence uncovered.

Child's F text of 209 is a Scottish song from the Motherwell Mss., and, although not one of the very best specimens, has been considered essentially traditional in make-up. F begins with two death-speech stanzas borrowed from a broadsheet; otherwise the old story is not essentially injured, though the style is inferior.<sup>10</sup> Child later implies<sup>11</sup> that this corruption came through a Scottish version ("Geordie Lukely") of one of the English broadsides. The Dusenbury "George E. Wedlock" is closely related to the F text and, if it not a localized variant of it, is at least descended from a similar source. A look at the two songs together proves this fact conclusively.

The opening stanza of the Arkansas song has been, as is the case with Child F, Stanza 1, adopted from some copy of the broadside and is reflected in Stanza 2 of "The Life and Death of George of Oxford." The three stanzas follow in sequence.

#### Randolph C1

Oh George E. Wedlock is my name,  
As many a man doth know me,  
An' many a bad deed have I done,  
But this will overthrow me.

#### Child F1

Geordie Lukely is my name,  
And many a one doth ken me; O  
Many an ill deed I hae done,  
But now death will owrecome me. O

<sup>9</sup> *Check-list of Recorded Songs*, Archive of American Folk Song, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., 1942. See "A-K," 114.

<sup>10</sup> Child, *loc. cit.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

## Oxford 2

George of Oxford is my name,  
And few there's but have known me;  
Many a mad prank have I played,  
But now they've overthrown me.

This is the only stanza that the American song has in common with the broadside tradition. However, the similarity to Child F continues. Stanzas 4 and 5 of the Arkansas text,

The sun went down when he got there,  
An' supper it was ready,  
An' this young lady she was there,  
She was both brief an' merry.

She took the letter in her hand,  
An' broke it open most speedily,  
She had not read but a line or two,  
Till she seen the case of Georgie.

are paralleled by Child F, Stanzas 5 and 6.

As he came in by Stirling town  
He was baith weat and weary;  
The cloth was spread, and supper set,  
And the ladies dancing merry.

When she read the first of it,  
She was baith glad and cheery;  
But before she had the half o' t read,  
She was baith sad and sorry.

The variation in all the cases cited so far is no more than might be expected in a 5000-mile trip in more than a century's time.

The Arkansas ballad has, moreover, added an incremental construction not to be found in Child F. In America, Child F, Stanza 3,

Where would I get a pretty little boy,  
That would fain win gold and money,

That would carry this letter to Stirling town,  
And give it to my lady?

and Stanza 7,

Come saddle to me the bonnie dapple gray,  
Come saddle to me the wee poney;  
For I'll awa to the king mysell,  
And plead for my ain love Geordie.

have been coupled and appear twice in the course of the song, as Arkansas Stanzas 2 and 3, and 6 and 7. In order to show the relationship to the Child lines, Arkansas Stanzas 2 and 7 have been used for quotation.

Is there a portman in this town  
That will ride for me from Staldon?  
That will ride for me from Staldon town  
With a letter for a lady?

Go saddle me up my milk white steed,  
Go saddle her up trim neatly,  
I'll ride with you to Staldon town,  
To plead the case of Georgie.

Admittedly, all of the final four stanzas of the American song do not have close textual parallels in Child F, Stanzas 8-17, but they do tell the same story in an abbreviated form. Again, such abbreviation is perfectly consistent with American folksong variation. First, Arkansas, Stanza 8,

The cart drove up as they got there,  
The rope it was made ready,  
An' the King looked over his right shoulder  
An' saw a neat trimmed lady.

with its unique opening lines, covers the same narrative material as Child F, Stanzas 8 and 9, although the giving of money to the poor is left out. Second, Arkansas, Stanza 9, is unusual for a traditional text, in that the girl offers the bribe before it is sought, but we must remember that the giving of money to the poor has been omitted in the American song and the presence of any bribe at all



is a characteristic of the traditional form of the story. Third, Arkansas, Stanza 10,

If you'll lay me down ten thousand pounds,  
I'll spare you the life of Georgie.  
You need no weep, or sigh any more,  
I'll spare you the life of Georgie.

is reasonably close to Child F, Stanza 12.

Up and spoke the king again,  
And oh, but he spake bonnie!  
"If thou'll pay me five thousand pound,  
I'll gie thee hame thy love Geordie."

And, finally, Arkansas, Stanza 11, although it has no parallel in Child, gives an excellent summary of the traditional ending.

Besides these marked similarities of the Dusenbury text and the traditional form of the ballad, one should also note that Child F, Stanza 2 (the second corrupt stanza in that song and a regular member of all broadside-derived texts),<sup>12</sup>

I neither murdered nor yet have I slain,  
I never murdered any;  
But I stole fyfteen of the king's bay horse,  
And I sold them in Bohemia.

is not in "George E. Wedlock."

Finally, in the interests of honesty, I think I should note that Line 3 of Arkansas, Stanza 8, "An' the king looked over his right shoulder" is common to many American texts of "Geordie"<sup>13</sup> that obviously do derive from broadsides. This fact is easily understandable, however, as the Dusenbury song has undoubtedly been subject to contact with other American texts of Child 209 and may well have absorbed the line in this fashion.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See "The Life and Death of George of Oxford," Stanza 15; "George Stoole," Stanza 20; Randolph A, Stanza 5; Cox, Stanza 5; Davis, Stanza 5; etc.

<sup>13</sup> See Cox, Stanza 4; Cecil Sharp and Maud Karpeles, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, A Stanza 4; Elisabeth Greenleaf and Grace Y. Mansfield, *Ballads and Sea Songs from Newfoundland*, Stanzas 4-5; etc.

<sup>14</sup> Louis Chappell, *Folk Songs of the Roanoke and Albemarle*, 37 prints a text under the title "Johnny Wedlock." This fragment is too short to be clearly identified, but from its title and the fact that it is made up of three broadside-derived stanzas, one could conclude that some contact of the two traditions has occurred here.

It is no wonder that the Stikeleather song<sup>15</sup> has never attracted scholarly attention. It is nowhere near as complete a specimen as "George E. Wedlock." In fact, "Georgie-O" could not be compressed much farther and retain the story. In addition, the forces of oral degeneration have begun their work in the rearranging of details and in the redistribution of characters. Nevertheless, it can easily be shown to be of the same family as its Arkansas cousin.

"Georgie-O" takes up the tale later than the Dusenbury text, omitting the stanzas derived from the broadsides and the lines dealing with the dispatch of the letter. In its abbreviated form, however, it has assumed an artistic unity of its own, much as did the Arkansas song with respect to Stanzas 2 and 3, and 6 and 7. North Carolina Stanzas 1 and 2, and 3 and 4 are utilized incrementally to carry the action along in an unusual (for "Geordie") but characteristically folk fashion.

Come bridle me up milk-white steed.  
The brownie ain't so able, O.  
While I ride down to Charlottetown  
To plead for the life of my Georgie, O.

When I got in sight of Charlottetown  
The gentlemen were so plenty, O,  
The table was sot and supper was got,  
And the gentlemen were so *merry*, O!

\*Come bridle me up my milk-white steed.  
The brownie ain't so able, O.  
While I ride down to Gallows Hill  
To plead for the life of Georgie, O.

When I got in sight of Gallows Hill,  
The gentlemen were so plenty, O!  
And the gallows all around my Georgie's neck,  
And the rings of gold were so yellow, O!

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<sup>15</sup> The song as printed by Scarborough differs slightly from the Wetmore text, although both variants are taken from the same woman. In the stanzas that follow below, I have *italicized* the word "merry" which appears as "plenty" in the Wetmore ballad and have starred Stanza 3 (\*) which is omitted in the Wetmore ballad.

North Carolina, Stanza 1 is close to Arkansas, Stanza 7 which was quoted earlier in this study, and North Carolina, Stanza 3 clearly has developed from the opening lines of the Stikeleather song somewhere in oral tradition. "Come saddle me up" lines are commonplace and travel easily, either within or between ballads. North Carolina, Stanza 2 reminds the reader of the situation depicted in Child F, Stanza 8,

She gaed up the Cannongate,  
Amang the puir folk monie;  
She made the handfus o red gold fly,  
And bade them pray for Geordie,  
And aye she wrang her lily-white hands,  
Saying, I'm a wearyd lady!

while the remarks on the set table and supper and the word "merry"<sup>16</sup> echoes the lines already quoted from Child F, Stanza 5,

The cloth was spread, and supper set,  
And the ladies dancing merry.

This stanza, then, is undoubtedly an abbreviation and confusion of the material in Child F, Stanzas 5-8 and Dusenbury, Stanzas 4 and 8. And, finally, North Carolina, Stanza 4 repeats the motif of North Carolina, Stanza 2, because of the artistic construction of this variant. Also, it contains narrative material omitted from "George E. Wedlock," but told in Child F, Stanza 14.

As she came up the Gallows Wynd,  
The people was standing many;  
The songs was sung, and the bells was rung,  
And the silks and cords hung bonnie.

At this point, the sequence of the events has been changed somewhat from its form in Child F, and, in the subsequent four lines (North Carolina, Stanza

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<sup>16</sup> I have assumed that "merry" is the word that Mrs. Stikeleather would normally use at this point and that "plenty" was a slip caused by the near-by parallel constructions. That seems only logical.

5), we find much the same situation that exists in Arkansas, Stanza 9 where the bribe is offered before it is sought. In fact, the final two lines of this North Carolina stanza are almost word-for-word the same as the final two lines of the Dusenbury stanza which was quoted earlier.

Then spoke the noble girl,  
 She spoke most brief and sorry too,  
 I'll lay you down ten thousand pounds,  
 If you'll spare the life of my Georgie, O!

The North Carolina ending,

Then spoke the noble judge,  
 He spoke most brief and sorry too,  
 "For to honor you both and for the money, O,  
 I will spare the life of your Georgie, O!"

differs from both the Dusenbury and Child F songs, but is just as effective in ending the story with the hero's release. And the mention of the bribe by the judge serves to emphasize the traditional character of this finish.

The fact that a judge and not a king (Dusenbury and Child F) is the authority is not particularly significant. The broadside texts have kings, judges and lawyers all to play the role.<sup>17</sup> It is very probable the North Carolina text adopted the judge from one of the broadsides known in the area. Such contact might also account for some of the language used in the song: i.e. "spoke the noble girl," etc. It is almost certain that the traditions of the broadside and Scotch folk ballads have mingled somewhat in the New World.

At any rate, with all this evidence before us, it becomes paramount that we reevaluate our estimates of the history of "Geordie" in America. The Dusenbury text is basically traditional. It is probably a highly localized variant of Child F. The Stikeleather song, while not such a clear-cut case, is probably from the same parent version. Whether or not the two songs are more closely related I cannot venture to say. But I expect there was once a cluster of traditional variants on this side of the Atlantic.

*Denison University*

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<sup>17</sup> See Child A-I, Davis A, Cox, Flanders, etc.

## COLLECTING FOLKSONGS FROM COLLEGE STUDENTS

by

Edwin C. Kirkland

*With Musical Transcriptions by Robert C. Lee*

Classes in folklore often bring to light songs and tales which the students learned and knew long before they took academic work in the material. Students are surprised when they discover that they have known for a long time some of the songs which they are studying. No teacher is surprised to find genuine folk songs and tales in the memory of students. However, certain difficulties arise in getting a copy of the students' variants uncontaminated by printed texts. This difficulty was vividly impressed on me during the summer of 1949. Angela Gunn Salswell, a student of mine at the University of Florida, learned from her father, William Gunn, a native of Scotland, three songs. In the course of her studies in folklore she found all of these in print, and had not known before that they were in print. Then she said to me, "Do you still want these songs?" "Yes," I replied, "but write them down and let me make a recording of your singing before you look at the printed texts again." When she handed manuscript copies to me she said, "I had to refresh my memory on two of the songs the text was identical even to dialect spelling with the printed text. What she because I had forgotten most of them." I found on checking her manuscript that had remembered was now hopelessly entangled with what she had read and could not be untangled. Her variants were not suitable for recording as specimens of genuine oral tradition. I silently and publicly resolved to attempt in my classes to do a better job of teaching the *scientific* recording of folklore. Accurate and proper recording from genuine oral tradition is the very foundation of folklore studies, and that recording must be sound.

Fortunately, one of the songs which Mrs. Salswell learned from her father was so well planted that she did not have to refresh her memory. This was the ballad "Get Up and Bar the Door." Although some specialists suspect that all songs contributed by educated persons are tainted by written texts or that the informants' not too distant ancestors were on a low cultural level, I believe that I have the support of other specialists when I hold neither of these suspicions unless there is factual evidence to suggest them. In connection with the first two songs given in this article I have not found such evidence.

## GET UP AND BAR THE DOOR

(Child 275)



It was about the Martinmas time  
 An' a gay time it was then, O  
 For our guid wife had puddins to make  
 And she biled them in the pan, O.

First she made a black puddin'  
 And then she made a white O.

. . . . .

The win' was blowin' fram the north;  
 It blew upon the floor O.  
 Said our guid man to our guid wife  
 "Gae up an' bar the door O."

"My han's are in my hussyfcap,  
 Guid man, as ye can see O;  
 It'll nae be barred this hunder year;  
 It'll nae be barred by me O."

They made a paction twixt them twa  
An' they made it firm an' sure O  
That the first ane spaking the foremost ward  
Would gae up an' bar the door O.

The win' blew cauder fram the north,  
It blew upon the floor O,  
But naether a ward woud ane of them spake  
For the barrin' o' the door O.

By there came twa travelers  
At twelve o'clock at nicht O.  
And naether ane could see house nor hale  
Nor cale nor candlelicht O.

"Coud this be a rich man's hous  
Or coud it be a poor O?"  
But ne'er a ward wad ane o' them spak  
For the barrin' o' the door O.

First they ate the black puddin'  
An' then they ate the white O;  
Though muckle thocht the guid wife to hersel'  
Yet not ane ward she spoke O.

Then said the ane unto the either,  
"Here man, take ye my knife O;  
Ye cut off the auld man's beard,  
An' I'll kiss the guid wife O."

Then up starts our guid man  
An' an angry man is he O,  
"Woud ye kiss my wife before my face  
An' scad me wi' puddin' bree O?"

Then up jumps our guid wife  
Gae three skips round the floor O,  
"Guid man ye've spaken the foremost ward;  
Gae up an' bar the door O."

Mrs. Myrtle Burnseed was also a student at the University of Florida during the summer of 1949. She sang a fragment of "The Wife Wrapt in Wether's Skin," which she learned in 1909 from Miss Judy Garrett of Birmingham, Alabama. This variant is entirely from oral tradition.

THE WIFE WRAPT IN WETHER'S SKIN

(Child 277)

*The lit-tle old man lived in the west, Dan-doo, Dan-doo,*

*Married th<sup>t</sup> old wo-man for none o' th<sup>t</sup> best With a*

*la - rum bla - rum kill - dum klo - rum*

*klish - a - ma klash - a - ma klin - go.*

The little old man lived in the west,  
 Dandoo, Dandoo  
 Married the old woman for none of the best  
 With a larum, blarum, killdum klorum  
 klishama klashama klingo.

The little old man went out to plow,  
 Dandoo, Dandoo.  
 Left the old woman to milk her cow  
 With a larum, blarum, killdum klorum  
 klishama klashama klingo.



The little old man came in from plowing;  
He asked if dinner was done.

There's a little piece of bread on the shelf;  
If you want any more you will cook it yourself.

The little old man jumped in the sheep pen, sheep pen,  
Grabbed a wether by the skin.

There may be some slight scholarly value in the contaminated songs which I discussed at the beginning of this article. At least I am sure that they are known and sung in some fragmentary form in America, and there are slight variations in words and music from the printed text. Therefore, I am giving the first stanza of each as Mrs. Salswell sang them. Her father did sing these to her when she was a child. How much of each song is from her memory is uncertain.

## JOCK O' HAZELDEAN



Why weep ye by the tide la-dye? Why weep ye by the  
tide? I'll wed ye to my young-est son And  
ye shall be his bride; And ye shall be his  
bride, la-dye, Sae come-ly to be seen, But  
aye she loot the tears down fa' For Jock o' Hazel-dean.

For a complete text and music see John Greig, *Scots Minstrelsie* (Edinburg, T. C. and E. C. Jack, Grange Publishing Works, 1893), I, 22. Greig says that the first stanza is old and the others were written by Walter Scott. "It is supposed that Sir Walter Scott founded this song upon an old ballad known as 'Jock o' Hazelgreen.' Sir Walter's verses were written for Campbell's work, *'Albyn's Anthology'* (1816). In the Leyden MS (*circa* 1690), there is a version of the melody entitled 'The Bony Brow,' older and more characteristically Scottish than "Willie and Annet," upon which the modern melody is based."

### HUNTINGTOWER

For a complete text and music see Greig, *op. cit.*, II, 136. Greig says, "This is an old Highland ballad, based upon a traditionary story relating to the ducal family of Athole. 'The Duke of Athole's Courtship' is the name by which the air was at one time most familiar in the north of Scotland. . . . Lady Naire wrote another version of this song which has not, however, succeeded in supplanting the older one."

TEN.

When ye gang a-wa', Jam-ie Far a-cross the  
sea lad-die, When ye gang o're to Ger-man-ie, What  
will ye bring to me, lad-die?

## SOME HUNGARIAN GAMES

by

Paul G. Brewster

For the following descriptions I am indebted to the kindness of Miss Mária Kresz, of Budapest, who sent them to me in a letter of September 12, 1947.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.

#### REAR COUPLE RUN AHEAD

This is played chiefly by older girls and is a favorite Sunday game in some sections of Hungary (e.g. in the county of Tolna). The players stand in a row in couples, one standing alone at the head of the row. When the latter cries out "Rear couple run ahead!" the two at the opposite end start running toward her, one on each side of the row, and try to join hands before she can catch them.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.

#### ANGEL-DEVIL

This game is played chiefly by smaller girls. A "gardener" gives to each player secretly the name of some flower. The "angel" and the "devil" are outside while the naming is taking place. The former comes in first, saying "Cin, cin" (imitative of knocking) as she enters. "Gardener" and "angel" then carry on the following conversation:

"Who is knocking?"

"The angel with the golden rod."

"What does she want?"

<sup>1</sup> Miss Kresz was a worker at the Neprajzi Museum under the direction of Dr. Karoly Viski until his untimely death in 1945. Since that time she has continued her work there as collector and lecturer under the distinguished ethnographer and folklorist Dr. Gyula Ortutay. Miss Kresz has done a great deal of collecting of riddles and games, and is the author of a popular book of riddles for children, *Találós Kérdések Könyve* (1946), and more recently, of a study on the history of game research in Hungary. At present she is engaged in collecting materials for a chapter on women's costumes of 1848 for a centennial volume commemorating the Hungarian War of Independence.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Kresz believes that this game may have had its origin in ancient nuptial rites.

The caller gives the name of some flower, and any player who has been given that name must accompany her.

Then the "devil" comes and a similar conversation is held:

"Bum, bum"

"Who's knocking?"

"The devil with the iron rod."

"What does he want?"

These alternate visits continue until all the players have been divided between the "angel" and the "devil." There are various ways of ending the game. Sometimes the "devils" must run between rows of kneeling "angels," who pinch them as they run. Sometimes the game ends with a tug-of-war between the two groups.<sup>3</sup> In one variant of the game the determination as to whether a player is an "angel" or a "devil" is made by subjecting her to a formalized series of questions, to which she must answer with a formalized series of replies and without laughing or giggling. If she succeeds in doing so, she is adjudged an "angel."<sup>4</sup>

### 3.

#### NO TITLE GIVEN

This is a spinning-room game. Each player in turn is seated on a chair in the center of the room. There is the following dialogue between him and the leader:

"Turn around, flee!"

"I won't."

"Till when?"

"Till Tuesday"

"What are you waiting for?"

"A kiss"

"From whom?"

<sup>3</sup> With us the tug-of-war enling occurs most frequently perhaps in connection with arch games, such as "Oranges and Lemons," "London Bridge" (where it is probably extraneous), etc.

<sup>4</sup> For parallels and descriptions of closely related games, see Gomme, I, 8 ("Angel and Devil"); Newell, p. 213 ("Colors"), 258 ("Ribbons"); Maspons y Labrós, p. 91; Bernoni, p. 51 (*I Colori*); Böhme, p. 587; Meier, No. 389; Rochholz, p. 449; Lewalter-Schläger, p. 253 (*Vogelverkaufen*); *ZdVfV*, XVII, 392. Sometimes (as in Lewalter-Schläger and Rochholz) the players are given the names of birds; in some instances the names of animals are given.

In Newell's "Colors," it is interesting to note, the first caller is the "Angel with the Golden Star" and the second "The Angel with the Pitchfork."

The seated player then gives the name of some girl present. As soon as she has kissed him he yields his place to another.

Sometimes the dialogue runs as follows:

"I've fallen into a well."

"How many yards deep?"

"Five (or any other number)"

"Who should draw you out?"

The player then gives the name of a girl in the group and she must give him as many kisses as the number of yards deep the well is.<sup>5</sup>

#### 4.

##### POOR MAN

This is often played in the schools. First, several slips of paper are torn. On these are written: poor man, thief, judge, or attendant. These papers are folded, and each player chooses one of them. The poor man is first to speak. He says, "Judge, I have lost my horse and carriage." The judge asks, "Whom do you suspect?" The poor man points to one of the other two players. If his guess is correct, the thief is beaten on the fingers by the attendant (the number of blows being decided by the judge). If the guess is wrong, it is the poor man who receives the blows.

#### 5.

##### PRIEST

This game is played by four boys. A stick representing the priest is stuck upright into the ground. Then four other sticks, one for each of the participants, are stuck in a rough square about it. Each boy in turn then sticks his knife into the ground by throwing it, and advances his stick toward the "priest" by as many inches as his knife penetrated the sod. This continues until one of the players has reached the stick in the center. The last to reach it is the "ass" and is pen-

<sup>5</sup> "There is a marriage custom in Transylvania in which the bridegroom is hung into a well after his nuptial night and pulled out only after the bride has expressed her pity for him."—Contributor's note.

The "yardage" reminds one of a very popular penalty in forfeit games, the measuring of so many yards of "love ribbon."

alized in some way. Usually he is blindfolded and a bit of grass and earth is cut and hidden for him to find. Sometimes the other players throw small bits of turf at his mouth; these he tries to parry by moving his knife back and forth before his face.<sup>6</sup>

## 6.

## Caülközés

A little wooden peg is stuck lightly into the ground. One player, armed with a stick, guards it as the others attempt to knock it down by throwing their sticks at it. The guard sets the peg up again while the player who knocked it down is running to recover his stick.<sup>7</sup>

## 7.

## KÓPÉ

In playing this game the room is darkened and all the children but one go out. The remaining player puts his hand on the knob of the door and calls the Kópé,<sup>8</sup> the others repeating some rhyme like this after him:

"Come up, Kópé, to knock,  
To visit St. George's candle;  
Here's your father; here's your mother,  
Selling salty bread!"

If this is repeated three times, the Kópé is said to come and bring money; but if the child in the room doesn't give him anything, "he'll pull his flesh off."

<sup>6</sup> "In the village in which this was collected (Nyárszó, Transylvania) the words were Roumanian, and the collector suspects a Roumanian influence upon the game."—Contributor's note.

<sup>7</sup> It will be noted that this resembles somewhat our game of King Stick. In another game, Célfa (aiming-stick), the boys stand in a row, each with a stick, and a player at the end throws a shorter stick down the row in front of them. This they try to hit by throwing their sticks at it. In manner of playing, it is very similar to the English "Nur and Spel."

The word *csülök* means pig's knee (knuckle), so it is probable that the peg was originally a bone from a pig. Cf. the English "Loggats."

<sup>8</sup> An imp-like mythical creature, malevolent in nature.

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## SPANISH FOLKLORE FROM ST. BERNARD PARISH, LOUISIANA<sup>1</sup>

by

Raymond R. MacCurdy, Jr.

### I. BACKGROUND

In 1761, Spain joined France against England in the Seven Years' War; and by the Treaty of Fontainebleau, November 3, 1762, before the termination of the war, France ceded to Spain the Territory of Louisiana, west of the Mississippi, and the Isle of Orleans. In the early years of the Spanish regime, immigration to Louisiana was slow; but under the administration of Governor Bernardo de Gálvez, an intensive period of colonization was inaugurated. In 1778,

"... the province was reviving under the healthful influence of the extension of its commercial franchises, when it received a considerable accession to its population by the arrival of a number of families, transported to Louisiana from the Canary Islands, at the king's expense. Some of them, under the command of Marigny de Mandeville, settled at *Terre aux Boeufs*, on a tract of land now included in the parish of St. Bernard. . ."<sup>2</sup>

St. Bernard Parish, in which this colony was established, is bounded by Orleans Parish and Lake Borgne on the north, by the Gulf of Mexico on the east and southeast, and by Plaquemines Parish on the west and southwest. Today, the descendants of those early Spanish settlers from the Canary Islands are still spoken of as *isleños*, or "Islanders," because of their origin; and they inhabit the towns of Delacroix and Reggio, situated on Bayou Terre aux Boeufs, and Ycloskey and Shell Beach, located about five miles east of the bayou.

There had been a number of French plantations in St. Bernard Parish, dating back to the French regime; and the French population was continuously increased by Acadian refugees who sought homes and security in the parish. By 1785, there were 765 Acadians settled in St. Bernard Parish,<sup>3</sup> some of whom went to the settlement already existing on Terre aux Boeufs,<sup>4</sup> while others were

<sup>1</sup> One article on riddles has already been published in this series: "Spanish Riddles from St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, XII (1948), 129-135.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Gayarré, *History of Louisiana* (4th ed., 4 vols.; New Orleans: Hansell and Bro., 1903), III, 115-116.

<sup>3</sup> John Sibley, "An Account of Louisiana," in *American Register*, Philadelphia, 1806-1810, 7 vols., IV, 92.

<sup>4</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, III, 171.



granted land just across the bayou. It is not strange, then, that Acadian French came to exert such great influence on the language of the Spanish settlers. In 1891, the Louisiana historian Alcée Fortier, who visited Terre aux Boeufs in that year, wrote: "They all speak Spanish, but a few speak the Creole patois and the younger ones speak English."<sup>5</sup> This is largely the case today, although only the eldest inhabitants now speak Louisiana French fluently; and all but the very aged speak English.

In addition to the French influence exerted on their language by their French-speaking neighbors, the Spanish colonists were further subjected to French influence by French-speaking priests from New Orleans, who served Terre aux Boeufs from the date of the founding of the colony in 1778 until 1787, and sporadically throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> However, the Spanish communities in St. Bernard Parish are unique in that they have retained Spanish as their primary language, whereas in the other Spanish settlements, the Spanish language soon gave way to French and English, and fell into disuse.

Little is known about emigration from the Spanish colonies in the Antilles to Louisiana, but emigrants from Spain and the Canary Islands are known to have stopped in Havana, the site of the captaincy-general to which Louisiana was subordinate, because in 1779, Governor Gálvez mentioned the arrival in Louisiana of the "families from Málaga, with the exception of two who remained ill at Havana."<sup>7</sup> It is significant to note that in addition to the original settlers from the Canary Islands, emigrants from southern Spain were early brought to Louisiana, and that they stopped in Cuba en route. The Spanish dialect of St. Bernard Parish reveals linguistic phenomena peculiar to these three places that could have been brought about only by intimate contact.<sup>8</sup> Numerous linguistic Doctor's Dissertation, the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1948. peculiarities of the speech of Santo Domingo are also found in the St. Bernard dialect, which fact suggests there was considerable intercourse between the two Spanish colonies; and it is definitely known that by 1794 a number of Spanish sugar planters who had resided in Santo Domingo had established residence in St. Bernard Parish.<sup>9</sup> A number of the original Spanish settlers of Terre aux Boeufs must have worked on the large sugar plantations owned by these Spaniards, for a columnist of the New Orleans *Weekly Picayune* wrote in 1838: "The columnists [ of Terre aux Boeufs ] earn their living by assisting the planters of

<sup>5</sup> Alcée Fortier, *Louisiana Studies* (New Orleans, F. F. Hansell and Bro., 1894), p. 200.

<sup>6</sup> Roger Baudier, *The Catholic Church in Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1939), p. 197 and *passim*.

<sup>7</sup> Alcée Fortier, *History of Louisiana* (4 vols., New York: Joynt and Co., 1904), II, 60.

<sup>8</sup> See the author's "The Spanish Dialect in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana." Unpublished

<sup>9</sup> Gayarré, *op. cit.*, III, 347-349.

the surrounding country in gathering their crops, manufacturing their sugar and hauling it to the city."<sup>10</sup>

It was the intention of the Spanish government that the early Spanish settlements in Louisiana, including the one on Terre aux Boeufs, should devote themselves to agriculture. "The settlers received pecuniary assistance and rations for four years; they were supplied with cattle, fowls, and farming utensils, and a house was built for each family, and a church for each settlement."<sup>11</sup> Many of the inhabitants of the parish continued to farm during the first half of the nineteenth century, and they sold their produce in the markets of New Orleans. The *Weekly Picayune* columnist gives an interesting account of their day-long excursions to the markets:

"The family does not send their cart but once a fortnight on the average. When they need to supply themselves with groceries—flour, etc.—they load their surplus products. Hay is thrown in for the team. They start at a time of day to insure their arrival at the market house about midnight. Man, wife, and children go to sleep on the hay. By the time they reach the intersection of the road along the levee, there is usually a long retinue of carts, all covered with sheets and blankets which are supported by hoops."<sup>12</sup>

The same writer mentions that Spanish-speaking negroes also came to the markets from Terre aux Boeufs: "... the venders are both negro and white, with their women and children with them. All speak Spanish."<sup>13</sup> Were these Spanish-speaking negroes former slaves who had been brought from Santo Domingo? Today, there are still a large number of negroes living along the northern end of Bayou Terre aux Boeufs in the town of Verette, but Spanish has fallen into disuse among them.

By 1838, the appearance in New Orleans of the dark-skinned Spaniards from the bayous and marshes of St. Bernard Parish must have been the subject of considerable comment; and our writer felt compelled to record a few facts about them "... before all their distinguishing marks are lost in the overwhelming tide of improvement, innovation, and all kinds of Americanism."<sup>14</sup> The writer goes on to say:

<sup>10</sup> Walter Prichard, "Some Interesting Glimpses of Louisiana a Century Ago," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIV (1941), 45. Reprinted from the *Weekly Picayune*, October 22, 1838.

<sup>11</sup> Fortier, *History of Louisiana*, II, 60.

<sup>12</sup> Prichard, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

"It is said by some that they are descended from ancient Gipsey clans or tribes. This notion is prevalent because of the singular physiognomy of many of the *isleños*, who have an indescribable expression, a something bordering on the romantic or the wild, which we have never elsewhere observed, and which may have favored the above mentioned opinion."<sup>15</sup>

The same author also makes some interesting observations on the social life of the *isleños*:

"The order of the society reminds us of the patriarchal state. There are some aged men among them, whose word is almost as potent upon their minds as that of a monarch. . .

They intermarry among themselves alone, rarely contracting alliances beyond the limits of the parish. We saw on one piece of land some half dozen house in quick succession, built alike. One of them, the most antiquated, we were told was the residence of an aged father of a family. As each of his sons were married, the successive houses were built—and they all live, in separate domiciles it is true, but in one little coterie of their own."<sup>16</sup>

"The social virtues are warmly cherished. No one enjoys a pleasure unless his neighbor partakes with him. No man among them kills a beef without distributing the greater portion of it around gratis to the rest. This is reciprocated—and thus are the best feelings of the human heart cultivated by the singular customs of this community."<sup>17</sup>

These observations are as pertinent today as when they were written over a century ago. The four Spanish-speaking towns in St. Bernard Parish, Delacroix, Reggio, Ycloskey, and Shell Beach, are unincorporated; and there is no municipal government.<sup>18</sup> Inter-marriage is still commonplace, although in the last few years, several young men have contracted marriage outside the parish, principally in New Orleans and in adjoining Plaquemines Parish. Also a very few men have gone to Spain, Cuba, and Mexico, and returned with Spanish-speaking brides.

The largest of the Spanish towns is Delacroix, popularly called Delacroix Island, which derives its name from the Countess Livaudais de Suau de la Croix from Paris, who donated land for the erection of a church and school in 1874.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>18</sup> For an account of the local government, see Edward J. Kammer, *A Socio-Economic Survey of the Marshdwellers of Four Southeastern Louisiana Parishes* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1941), pp. 80-83.

<sup>19</sup> Baudier, *op. cit.*, p. 586.

Population statistics are not available for the towns of St. Bernard Parish, but Ward 5, in which Delacroix is located, had 1,454 inhabitants in 1940;<sup>20</sup> and an unofficial religious census, conducted in 1941, estimated the population of Delacroix at 1000.<sup>21</sup> It is estimated by the writer that the other three Spanish-speaking communities of Reggio, Shell Beach, and Ycloskey have a combined population of approximately 1000. Delacroix has had a school since 1894;<sup>22</sup> and in 1941, there were four elementary schools located in the parish, with a total enrollment of 647 students.<sup>23</sup> Naturally, the advent of public education has had much to do with the growing influence of English. Only English is taught in the schools; and in Delacroix, it is forbidden to speak Spanish on the school grounds.

In spite of the accessibility of schools, the illiteracy rate in St. Bernard Parish has always been very high. After visiting Delacroix in 1891, Fortier remarked "... not one person in the whole number of about three hundred inhabitants could read."<sup>24</sup> According to the 1930 census, the percentage of illiteracy in the parish was 12.9; but according to a survey made by Kammer in 1941, the percentage was 22.3.<sup>25</sup> Very few of the inhabitants of St. Bernard Parish are literate in Spanish, the only exceptions being those few persons who have recently immigrated there from Spain or other Spanish-speaking countries. A good illustration of the complete lack of literary pretensions of these Spanish people is found in the fact that a considerable number of the men belong to the Cervantes lodge of the Masonic Order in New Orleans, yet when questioned by the writer, not a single member had the vaguest notion as to the identity of Cervantes. Nor did a single inhabitant have any knowledge of the historical personage, Francisco Gómez Quevedo y Villegas, the great Spanish satirist who is the protagonist of many of their folktales.

It is difficult to estimate the amount of direct contact there has been between the inhabitants of St. Bernard Parish and the nationals of Spanish countries. There has been some recent immigration to St. Bernard from Spain and Latin America; and the writer has talked with persons born in Andalusia, Galicia, Santander, the Canary Islands, Cuba, and Mexico. According to the census of 1930, there were 324 foreign born white persons residing in the parish;<sup>26</sup> but

<sup>20</sup> "Population of Minor Civil Divisions in Louisiana: 1940," Bureau of Census Release, Series p-2A, No. 1 (A1-17, G-36), (Washington, D. C., January 21, 1941).

<sup>21</sup> Kammer, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

<sup>22</sup> Baudier, *op. cit.*, p. 586.

<sup>23</sup> Kammer, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>24</sup> Fortier, *Louisiana Studies*, p. 207.

<sup>25</sup> Kammer, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>26</sup> Kammer, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

there is no breakdown of this figure into language groups, and a large part of the 324 immigrants were probably Italians who settled in the northern part of the parish.

One unusual occupation frequently took male inhabitants of Delacroix to Cuban shores during the 1920's: rum-running. Kammer reports:

"Some of the men who were engaged in conversation looked back wistfully on Prohibition days when rum-running was the sole occupation of many. Money was plentiful and easy to get then. Although rum-running was a major occupation throughout the marsh area during the Prohibition era, only at Delacroix Island was there heard any wish for a return to that occupation."<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the remote location of Delacroix and the other Spanish communities, the occupational pursuits of the inhabitants have contributed largely to the retention of Spanish as the primary language. With the exception of small shopkeepers and tradesmen, the great majority of the people devote themselves to trapping during the trapping season which extends from November 30 until February 1. Kammer gives the following account of trapping activities:

"During the trapping season the whole family leaves home to spend the time at a camp far away in the marshes. These camps are either ramshackle huts or houseboats. . . The whole family is crowded into these two rooms, which are small at best, while hung from the ceiling are row after row of skins stretched on frames to dry. A wood-stove is used for both cooking and heating. Both beds and bunks are used for sleeping, with the children crowded three and four to a bed. A houseboat is merely a hut on a small barge. A slip for the boat is dug into the bank and it is tied to stakes driven into the ground.

The family moves into their dwelling a week or two before the trapping season opens to get things in readiness. All take a hand in looking over the traps and the pelt-stretchers, repairing them if necessary. When the season starts, each member of the family has an appointed task. The husband and the boys set out the traps and then run the lines. Even the very small boys run a little trap line of their own near the camp. When the day's catch is brought home, the women and girls skin the animals, run the skins through a clothes wringer to remove any bits of flesh and moisture that may remain, and place the pelts on stretchers. While the men are away from the camp the womenfolk keep the camp clean and prepare the meals. This routine is followed every day of the trapping season, being interrupted only by a trip back to the settlement to celebrate Christmas and a rare day off to buy supplies at the nearest store."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

"There are several ways in which the trapper disposes of his catch. The first is to sell the furs to itinerant buyers who go about the bayous and lakes in motorboats and call at each camp. These buyers may represent fur companies in New Orleans, or they may be independents. The second method is for the trapper to bring his furs in to the nearest settlement where there are usually several buyers. Another method is to sell or trade the furs at a store for supplies; or to pay off debts at the store with furs. Again, the trapper may pool his furs with those of several others at a public auction. To protect themselves against collusion on the part of the buyers, the trappers usually reserve the right to reject any and all bids. Finally, the trapper may wait until the end of the season and then bring his entire catch into New Orleans to peddle it among the large fur companies there. This last procedure is rare and fraught with risk, because while in storage the furs may become damaged by mildew or vermin."<sup>29</sup>

After the end of the trapping season in February, the inhabitants devote themselves to fishing for hard-shell crabs, to the cultivation of soft-shell crabs and oysters, or to repairing their shrimp trawls and boats in preparation for the shrimp season which extends from April 16 until June 9, and from August 11 until October 31. Next to trapping, shrimp fishing is the most lucrative occupation of the inhabitants; and although the whole family does not participate as in trapping, the great majority of the men and ten-age boys are actively engaged in shrimp fishing during the open season. The normal crew of the shrimp trawlers is composed of two or three men, and at night several trawlers anchor together. This is always the occasion for great merriment. After a self-appointed cook prepares the evening meal which is shared in common by ten or twelve visiting fishermen, there follows a long session in which jokes are swapped, stories told, and favorite songs lustily sung by one or more of the local bards. These festivities, which go on night after night in the open gulf, have contributed in large measure to the preservation of a vigorous Spanish folk-culture.

In summary, the relative isolation of the Spanish communities of St. Bernard Parish and the dedication of the inhabitants to occupations which keep them largely removed for long periods of time from contact with English-speaking people have encouraged and stimulated the retention of their native Spanish language and folklore.

## II. JOKES AND ANECDOTES OF QUEVEDO

The following Quevedo stories were recorded on phonograph records and then transcribed during the summers of 1941 and 1947. In the picaresque tales

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

of St. Bernard Parish, as in many other parts of the Spanish-speaking world, Quevedo (sometimes spelled Aquevedo) is the equivalent of the Spanish folk-tale protagonist Pedro de Urdemalas and the German Till Eulenspiegel. This character may properly be identified as the great seventeenth century satirist Francisco Gómez Quevedo y Villegas, whose biting quips and verve have long caused him to be considered as a paragon of wit.

The tales are transcribed in standard orthography, but no change has been made in grammar or syntax.

### 1. QUEVEDO HACE UNA REVERENCIAL AL REY

(Informant: Adam Pérez, Jr., 18 years old)

Todito el mundo saludaba al rey cuando [ el ] rey pasaba pero Quevedo nunca ni se agachaba, y al rey no le gustaba eso. Una vez ha pensado, dice:- Yo voy a jeringar Quevedo. Lo voy a mandar acá por la mañana [ y ] cuando venga aquí voy a tener dos tablas clavadas en la puerta, y asina no puede entrar sin agacharse.

Y asina hizo. Por la mañana mandó acá a Quevedo y Quevedo vino. Pero Quevedo cuando vió las tablas en la puerta lo pensó lo que era. Y en vez de entrar como el rey lo esperaba se viró<sup>1</sup> el culo y entró el culo y asina vino al rey.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. LA BALLENA (VA LLENA) DE QUEVEDO

(Informant: Adam Pérez, Jr.)

Quevedo siempre estaba haciendo maldad. Nunca estaba contento ver las cosas como estaban. Y una vez dijo:-Yo voy a engañar a toda la gente.

Y cogió dos barriles y llenó uno de agua y dejó el otro vacío. Y cogió y capoteó<sup>3</sup> los dos en el río.

Y fuése gritando:- ¡Una va llena, una va llena!

Y seguro toda la gente salió a ver la ballena de Quevedo.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Virar* = to turn around, from the nautical term *virar*, "to tack."

<sup>2</sup> This particular tale is found in the Eulenspiegel cycle; and a Spanish variant, with Quevedo as the protagonist, has been collected in Tampa, Florida. See Ralph S. Boggs, "Spanish Folklore from Tampa, Florida: (No. V) Folktales," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, II (1938), 104.

See also Ralph S. Boggs, *Index of Spanish Folktales* (FF Communications No. 90. Helsinki, 1930), Mt. 875.

<sup>3</sup> *Capotear* = to capsize, to turn over, from French *capoter*.

<sup>4</sup> This motive with play on the Spanish words *ballena* and *va llena* is not listed in the *Motif Index*.



3. LA DEFENSA DE QUEVEDO<sup>5</sup>

(Informant: Adam Pérez, Jr.)

Una vez Quevedo se enamoró la hija del rey. Ahora el rey nunca le gustaba Quevedo y Quevedo siempre le estaba haciendo maldad; y le dijo:-Mira, si tú te arrimas alrededor de mi hija, yo te voy a cortar el pescuezo. Más que te vengas alrededor mi tierra yo voy a cortar el pescuezo.

Y Quevedo estaba asustado lo primero; él quería a la hija rey bastante. Dijo a sí mismo:- Yo sé lo que hay hacer-. Y fué y cogió una vilvuelta<sup>6</sup> y la llenó de su tierra, con su tierra llenó la vilueta de tierra. Y por la noche un amigo de él lo pusara<sup>7</sup> debajo la ventana de la hija del rey. Por la mañana el rey se despertó, se levantó y lo primero vió fué Quevedo bajo la ventana de su hija. Y el rey dice:- Ahora te tengo, aquí estás sobre mi tierra-. Dice:- Voy a cortar tu pescuezo-.

Y Quevedo dice:- No, no pase nada. Es mi tierra que tengo en la vilvuelta.<sup>8</sup>

## 4. LA DEFENSA DE QUEVEDO

(Informant: Martin C. Alfonso, Sr., 33 years old)

Quevedo era un hombre que le daba mucho tormento al rey, y el rey le dijo a Quevedo, dice:- Mira, si tú sigues dándome tormento te voy a matar.

Y entonces Quevedo le dijo:- Pero, hombre, ¿qué tormento te doy?

Dice:- Mira, Quevedo, -dice- no te quiero más en mi tierra. Vas a largar de aquí porque otra vez que te cojo en mi tierra te voy a fusilar.

Y entonces Quevedo se travesó para Francia y se llevó su caballo y su carreta con él. Y enredó las ruedas de la carreta con tierra francesa, y puso . . . enredó

<sup>5</sup> The informant did not give a title to this tale. The title given here is an adaptation of the tale type called *The Trespasser's Defense*. Numerous variants of tales centered around this motive have been collected, of which only two are given here. This motive also appears in other distinct tales such as No. 7, *infra*.

<sup>6</sup> *Vilvuelta* = wheelbarrow, from Louisiana French *birouette*.

<sup>7</sup> *Pusar* = *pujar*.

<sup>8</sup> Antti Aarne, *The Types of the Folk-Tale: A Classification and Bibliography*. Translated and enlarged by Stith Thompson. (FF Communication No. 74. Helsinki, 1928), Mt. 1590.

Stith Thompson, *Motif Index of Folk Literature* (FF Communications Nos. 106, 107, 108, 109, 116, 117. Helsinki, 1932-1936), J 1161.3.

This tale has long been widely known in Europe. It is found in Grimm and among the North American Indians; and a Spanish variant has been collected in Tampa, Florida. See Boggs, "Spanish Folklore From Tampa, Florida: (No. V) Folktales," *op. cit.*, p. 104.



las patas caballo también con tierra francesa. Y donde él se sentó puso una hueta<sup>9</sup> con tierra francesa. Entonces vino para atrás al rey esotro día y gritaba:- ¡Ho! ¡He! ¡He! Señor rey, -dice- éste es Quevedo.

Dice:- Pero, Vuedevo, ¿no te dije yo que te quería por aquí?

Dice:- Sí, usted me dijo que no me quería en su tierra -dice- pero yo no estoy en su tierra.

Dice:- ¿Cómo no estás en mi tierra?

Dice:- No, hombre, mira aquí. Estoy en la hueta y la hueta tiene tierra francesa. Pues no estoy en su tierra.

Y le ganó el rey.<sup>10</sup>

### 5. COMO QUEVEDO SALIO DEL SACO

Un día estaban todos los soldados en el patio al lado la casa del rey; y la reina era coja. Y Quevedo les dice a los soldados, dice:- Te apuesto que le digo a la reina que es coja.

Y dicen los soldados:- Quevedo, no diga que es coja porque vas a penar la vida.

Entonces Quevedo fué, cogió un pañé<sup>11</sup> de flores y lo llenó de todas clases flores. Y cuando estaba la reina, dice:- Señora, usted es coja--. Y la reina estaba muy alegre escogiendo flores, y Quevedo decía:- Usted es coja, señora.<sup>12</sup>

Pues entonces el rey se dió cuenta que Quevedo estaba llamando la mujer de él coja. Entonces llamóse a Quevedo y dice:- Quevedo, te voy a fusilar. Te voy a mandar a botar al río.

Entonces metió a Quevedo en un saco y lo amarró. Llevaron los soldados a Quevedo para echar al río. Y antes llegar al río se pararon a tomar un trago. Y estaba Quevedo en el saco gratando, dice:- No me caso con hija rey. No, no me caso con ella.

Entonces salía un pastor que venía con animales al ganado. Dice después:- ¿Qué te pasa, hombre?

Dice:- Que quieren que me case con hija rey y no me caso con ella. Primero dejo que me boten al río.

Dice el pastor:- Pues, Quevedo, yo me caso con ella. Yo te voy a sacar del saco y tú me metes a mí--. Entonces desamarró Quevedo el saco y Quevedo se salió. El se metió y Quevedo amarró. Llegaron los soldados y gritaba el pastor, dice:- Sí, yo me caso. Pues, sí, yo me caso.

<sup>9</sup> *Hueta*=box, from French *boîte*?

<sup>10</sup> See footnotes 5 and 8.

<sup>11</sup> *Pañé* = basket, from French *panier*.

<sup>12</sup> The first part of this tale which hinges upon the confusion of *escoja* and *es coja* has been collected in Tampa, Florida. See Boggs, "Spanish Folklore from Tampa, Florida: (No. V) Folktales," *op. cit.*, p. 105.

Y dicen ellos que estaban medio jalados:<sup>13</sup> Tú te vas a casar.

Llegaron al río y echaron el pastor al medio del río. Pero Quevedo siguió con el ganado del pastor. Estro día por la mañana vino al palacio del rey. Pasó por la tierra del rey gritando ¡ho! ¡he! al ganado. Y dice el rey:- Pues, Quevedo, ¿no te mandé a botar al río?

Dice:- Sí, me botaron -dice- pero si me echan más al medio más ganado saco.

Entonces el rey dice:- Pues yo voy a ver si puedo sacar ganado-. Y el rey hizo que los soldados lo metieran en un saco amarrado, y tiraron el rey al río. Y entodavía está el rey sacando ganado.<sup>14</sup>

## 6. LA APUESTA QUE QUEVEDO HIZO CON EL REY

(Informant: Martin C. Alfonso, Sr.)

Un día vino Quevedo y le dijo al rey que le apostaba que él no sabía lo que era más blanco; y el rey le dijo que sí que sabía. Entonces Quevedo le preguntó, dice:- Entonces ¿qué es el más blanco?

Dice:- La leche.

Dice:- Pero te apuesto lo que quiera que la leche no es más blanca.

Y dice el rey:- Entonces ¿qué es lo que más blanco?

Dice:- El día.

Pues el rey le apostó Quevedo. Aquella noche estaba el rey durmiendo y Quevedo se metió para adentro y puso una tina llena de leche al lado la cama. Y a las dos de la mañana Quevedo lo llamó, dice:- ¡Rey, rey, levántese!

El rey se levantó muy apurado y cayó adentro la tina. Entonces se echó a reír, dice:- Pues ya, Quevedo, me ganó.

Entonces Quevedo le dijo:- ¿ve? Si hubiera sido de día pues no te caes en la tina de leche; ya se ve que el día es mucho más blanco.

El rey dice: Sí, tienes mucha razón. Ganaste, Quevedo.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Jalado* = drunk.

<sup>14</sup> For the second part of the tale which concerns Quevedo's release from the sack, see Aarne-Thompson, *op. cit.*, Mt. 1535 V a, b. Thompson, *op. cit.*, K 842, K 1051. Boggs, *Index*, Mt. 1535 V. Aurelio M. Espinosa, *Cuentos populares españoles recogidos de la tradición oral de España* (3 vols.; Madrid, Imprenta S. Aguirre, 1946), I, no. 193. Manuel J. Andrade, *Folk-Lore from the Dominican Republic* (Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society, Vol. XXIII. New York: The American Folk-Lore Society, 1930), nos. 15, 17.

The second part of the St. Bernard Parish tale is only a fragment of Mt. 1535, which has been collected all over Europe. It is Grimm No. 61. In Spain and Latin America, this tale is a part of the Juan Bobo or Juan Listo cycle. It is found also in Africa, the West Indies, among the North American Indians, in New Mexico, the Philippines, other parts of the Spanish-speaking world, French Canada, and Indonesia.

<sup>15</sup> This motive probably belongs to the section on riddles of comparison in the H660's of the *Motif Index*, though this particular form does not appear there.

## 7. COMO QUEVEDO SE SALVO DE SER AHORCADO

(Informant: Philomène González, age 17)

Hace muchos años en una villa en España vivía un hombre que se llamaba Quevedo. Él siempre estaba haciendo cosas que al rey no le gustaban. Un día el rey le dijo a Quevedo que se saliera de la tierra de él o él lo iba a ahorcar.

Antes de muchos años . . . días, el rey vió Quevedo caminando por la tierra de él. Y él les dijo a los soldados que lo cogieran y lo ahorcaran. Quevedo le dijo al rey:- Yo no estoy en tu tierra; yo estoy en mi tierra. Yo tengo tierra de mí en mis zapatos.<sup>16</sup>

Quevedo no . . . el rey no creía que eso era una cosa para risa conque cogió . . . hizo a los soldados coger a Quevedo. Quevedo les dijo a los soldados que él quería escoger su enciña<sup>17</sup> donde lo iban a ahorcar. Conque él escogió una, la más chica que él halló, y los soldados no lo podían ahorcar en esa enciña. Conque lo tuvieron que dejar ir.<sup>18</sup>

*The University of New Mexico*

<sup>16</sup> See footnote 5.

<sup>17</sup> *Enciña* = tree of any kind, from Portuguese *encinha*, "evergreen oak."

<sup>18</sup> Thompson, *op. cit.*, K558. Boggs, *Index*, Mt. 875. This motive appears to be fairly current in Europe.

## A SPANISH (?) SPINNER IN LOUISIANA

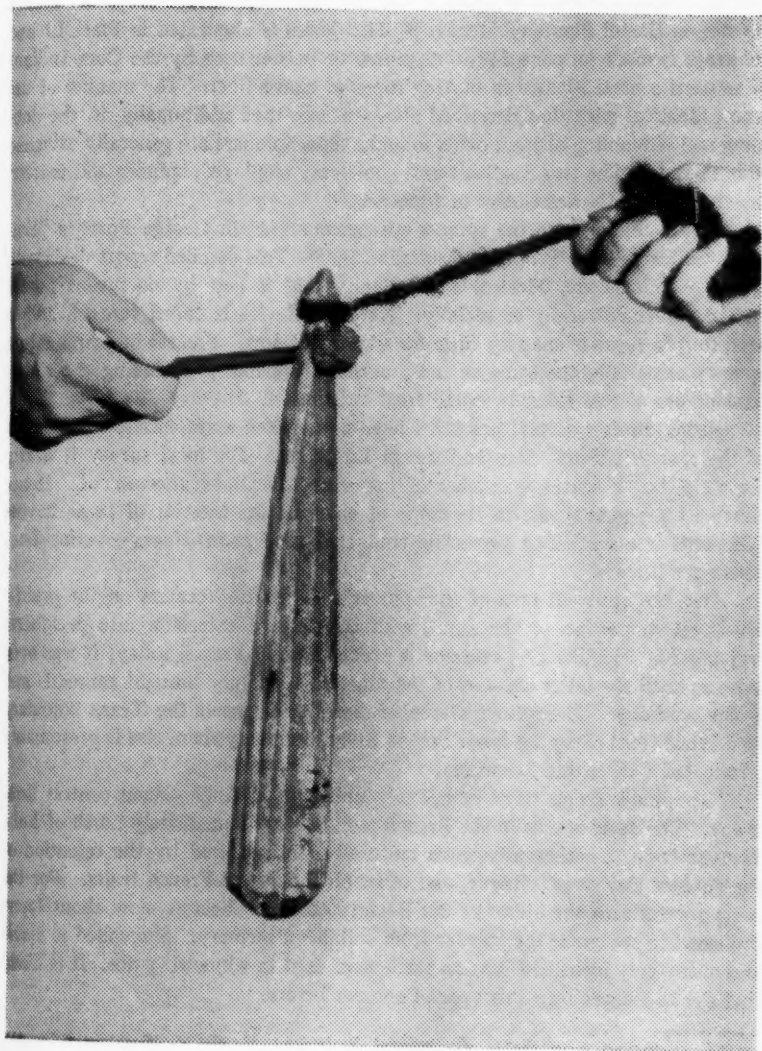
by

Fred Kniffen

Several years ago I obtained from the Koasati Indians of Allen Parish, Louisiana, the spinning device illustrated in the accompanying photograph (Fig. 1). In demonstrating its use an Indian girl faced an older woman and, rotating the spinner in a clockwise direction, backed away just rapidly enough to maintain tension on a growing length of Spanish-moss cord or yarn. The darkened moss had been taken by the woman from the wire fence where it had dried after curing. The individual strands were aligned by combing with the fingers. Then a twist of fibers was attached to the knob of the spinner (see Fig. 1) and more strands fed in as the yarn was spun. To produce a length of some five feet took considerably less than the same number of minutes. A saddle blanket woven of moss that had been spun in like manner was subsequently displayed.

Since noting spinner and saddle blanket was completely incidental to primary objectives at the time, I carelessly failed to obtain the Koasati term for the device and to inquire fully as to its uses, both matters apparently of no great importance in the present connection. The spinner seemed to be quite foreign to any mechanical concept that might be indigenous to Southeastern Indian cultures. In answer to a query on this score, Dr. John R. Swanton, dean of Southeastern ethnologists, stated that he had never encountered the spinner during many years devoted to the area and its peoples. However, he proffered both a written account of its presence in Mexico and a verbal report of its use by the Araucanians of Chile.

Figure 1—Spinner obtained from Koasati Indians of Louisiana, together with cord spun of cured Spanish moss. The instrument is composed of two parts, shaft and blade, each made of pine wood and each about a foot long. Note head on near end of shaft to prevent blade from slipping off. Observe also the notched small end of the blade where the moss cord is attached. The individual holding the shaft employs an eccentric motion to rotate the blade in a to-him clockwise direction, imparting a twist to the fibers held firmly at the opposite end by the second individual. The operator of the spinner backs away at the rate necessary to maintain tension on the cord, which is growing in length through the constant addition of hand-combed fibers by the person at the right.



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The written account referred to by Dr. Swanton occurs in J. M. Rose's "Notes on Useful Plants of Mexico."<sup>1</sup> The device is illustrated in Plate LI and reference is made on page 249 to a spinner or twister used by the Cora Indians of western central Mexico in making ropes of agave fiber. The manner of use seems identical with that described above, except that additionally, in the doubling and redoubling of spun cords to make rope, spinners are generally attached to both ends. The two English terms commonly employed, spinner and twister, are therefore aptly descriptive of functions.

Further reference to the spinner was encountered in George Foster's "Empire's Children—The People of Tzintzuntzan."<sup>2</sup> This detailed report deals with a city of Michoacán, Mexico, a community that is now by no means purely Indian, either culturally or racially. Here the device is called *taravía*, and is used to spin ropes of maguey fiber for edging gill nets. Process of manufacture appears essentially the same as those outlined previously, including the simultaneous use of two spinners in the final twistings.

During the last several months I have undertaken a systematic examination of the spinner's distribution and use in Louisiana. The local survey is nearly complete, but it leaves a number of important questions unanswered. Hence this brief progress report in the hope of enlisting the interest of those having additional information or promising contacts. The known facts covering Louisiana are these:

First, the apparent area of the spinner's distribution centers on the prairie, southwestern portion of the state, with but limited extension into peripheral regions (Fig. 2). Prairie Louisiana is predominantly French today; it was even more so until the latter decades of the nineteenth century brought railroads and a new economy. The spinner's area of distribution meets the Texas boundary on a broad front along the lower Sabine River, but everywhere else is presumably terminated well within Louisiana.

The spinner seems to be completely unknown in Anglo-Saxon central Louisiana. The same is true in the French section lying immediately north of Lake Pontchartrain, a conservative area culturally, as indicated by the retention of the outdoor clay oven, pirogue, and other old Louisiana-French traits. For the same general area the oldest of the Bayou Lacombe Choctaw, now about forty, professed to recognize the spinner from childhood memory. She called it *amale* and mistakenly identified it as an implement used in winnowing rice. It is likely that she had never seen this type of spinner before.

<sup>1</sup> *Contributions from the U. S. National Herbarium*, V, No. 4, Washington, (1899), 209-259.

<sup>2</sup> *Smithsonian Institution, Inst. of Soc. Anthro.*, Publ. No. 6, Washington, (1948), p. 111.

Within the area of Louisiana where the spinner is known to have been used, the comparative recency of its survival can be nicely gauged by the age of the informants who recognize it. In some, especially the peripheral, sections it is only the oldest persons, those around eighty, who have any memory of the implement. The eldest of the surviving Chitimacha, who live well within the area of former use, disclaim any knowledge of it. Most of the modern, non-French rice farmers of the central prairie likewise do not recognize it. On the other hand, near Milton, a village of the conservative Vermilion River area, a comparative youngster of forty-six knew the implement and its uses well. A colored woman about twenty-five years of age, living near the Mississippi River, promptly identified the spinner as a *willowness* and recalled using it as a child when helping her grandfather, a maker of moss horse collars. Among the Koasati, where cultural lag is not unexpected, the spinner is in use at present, and the same is true of the coastal marsh of southwestern Louisiana, an area in which cattle ranching is still a major economic activity. Here the implement is often made on the spot of such materials as happen to be at hand, when there is spinning to be done.

For some unexplained reason, Post's otherwise excellent "Acadian Ethnology,"<sup>3</sup> dealing with the precise area under discussion, fails to mention the spinner. However, it does appear in Ditchy's thorough work on the Louisiana Acadians,<sup>4</sup> under the name *tarabi*. Most certainly *tarabi* is the but slightly altered French derivative from the Spanish *taravía*, previously mentioned for Michoacán. That the borrowing was in the indicated direction and not the reverse is supported by the readiness with which Spanish *taravía* can be analyzed etymologically,<sup>5</sup> while the French *tarabi* has so far completely resisted such attempts.

Examination of both French and Spanish terms is exceedingly enlightening, the one in a negative and the other in a positive way. Ditchy's manner of listing *tarabi*<sup>6</sup> shows it to be a word peculiar to Louisiana Acadian speech, unknown in Canadian French, the progenitor of the former. A modern, unabridged, standard French dictionary<sup>7</sup> lists no such word. However, there is a *tarabite*:<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Lauren C. Post, *Acadian Ethnology*, mimeographed, Baton Rouge, (1935).

<sup>4</sup> Jay K. Ditchy, *Les Acadiens Louisianais et Leur Parler*, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, (1932), p. 200.

<sup>5</sup> In his *Diccionario General de la Lengua Española*, Buenos Aires, (1945), V, p. 450, Eduardo de Echegaray traces *taravilla* to the vulgar-Latin *taratanāra*, literally, "for the making of noise." The Espasa-Calpe *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada*, Bilbao, (1928), LIX, p. 553, suggests as a source the Latin *trabícula*, "a small piece of wood."

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 200.

<sup>7</sup> *Larousse du XX<sup>e</sup> Siècle*, Paris, (1933).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, p. 594.



"Gros câble que les Indiens d'Amérique fabriquent avec cordes ou des lianes."

The definition suggests a possible product of the instrument under discussion. Quite clearly, *tarabi* and *tarabite*<sup>9</sup> are not basic French words but rather are comparatively recent New World borrowings from Spanish.

*Taravía*, or more commonly, *taravilla* or *tarabilla*,<sup>10</sup> is an old Spanish term meaning, among other things, a "mill-clack," or a kind of "wooden latch for doors and windows."<sup>11</sup> The resemblance in form and action, if not in sound, between definitions and spinner can easily be imagined. However, the application of the term *tarabilla* needs no interpretation as defined in the Santamaria dictionary.<sup>12</sup> Here name is given to spinner, which is described for both Chile and the state of Tabasco, Mexico. Nature of spinner, manner of use, and application to both horsehair and plant fibers are exactly as described previously. For Argentina and some portions of Mexico, Santamaria lists quite different meaning for *tarabilla*.<sup>13</sup> It is evident, then, that *tarabilla* with its variants is a term used in both Spain and Latin America to apply to several different objects.

An informant described the implement and its uses as recorded above for Cuba, but employed the name *tarabeco*.<sup>14</sup> Several Venezuelans professed ignorance of word and device; their evidence is of little value since they are city-dwellers.<sup>15</sup> A young informant, for some years resident in rural Spain, did not recognize the spinner, but neither did he know the well-established word,

<sup>9</sup> Most certainly *tarabite* is from Spanish *tarabita*. In Central and South America the latter term is applied to a thick rope strung between two trees on opposite sides of a stream, along which a leather basket is transferred from one side to the other by imparting a rotary motion to the rope. *Tarabita* is also the name given to a little attached stick used to make adjustments in saddle cinches. Additionally, it is synonymous with *tarabilla*, as applied to the spinner. *Tarabita* and *tarabilla* are obviously variants of the same root. See *tarabita* in Francisco J. Santamaria's *Diccionario General de Americanismos*, III, México, D. F., (1943), p. 136; and in the Real Academia Española *Diccionario de la Lengua Española*, Madrid, (1939), p. 1199.

<sup>10</sup> *Taravilla* in *A New Pronouncing Dictionary of the Spanish and English Languages*, by Mariano Velazquez de la Cadena, Chicago and New York, (1947), p. 609; but *tarabilla* in the Spanish Academy dictionary, *op. cit.*, from which the Velazquez version is directly derived.

<sup>11</sup> Of the variety of meanings attached to the word, two motifs are notably recurrent, one referring to a rotary motion, and the other to a clicking noise.

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, III, p. 136.

<sup>13</sup> In Argentina a child's toy, apparently a bull-roarer.

<sup>14</sup> *Tarabeco* could be found in none of several Spanish and Spanish-American dictionaries consulted.

<sup>15</sup> There is a misleading association of present-day knowledge of the spinner with Indians and Negroes, depending upon the area in question. The association has nothing to do with a racial or cultural heredity peculiar to these peoples, but rather is due to their prevailing rural isolation and low economic status. Present information indicates that Mexican Indians commonly employing their own idiom use Spanish *tarabilla* for the spinner.



*tarabilla*, which makes his evidence of dubious value. While *tarabilla* does not mean the spinner as defined in any strictly European-Spanish dictionary, there is a *torcedero*, a twister or twisting mill, the exact nature of which is not clear. In Guatemala the spinner is called *tarabilla* and is used as in Mexico.<sup>16</sup> In Colombia it is given a variety of names: *taraba*, *tarabilla*, *tarabita*, and *torcedero*.<sup>17</sup>

The manner of using the spinner in Louisiana parallels that described for Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, Chile and Cuba, even to the employment of two spinners on opposite ends in the final stages of making a hair rope. Despite the mention of moss first in connection with the spinner in Louisiana, the basic association of the instrument in this state is most certainly with hair from the mane and tail of horses and occasionally from cows' tails. Moss is naturally abundant only on the eastern margin of the spinner's area of known occurrence in Louisiana.<sup>18</sup> One intelligent informant from the Bayou Lafourche section insisted that moss for weaving saddle blankets was not spun with the device under discussion, although he could not remember the process formerly employed. For the coastal marsh, where the spinner is still in use with hair, an informant stated that moss is spun entirely with the unaided hand. Insistent denial of use of the spinner to prepare moss yarn used in making horse collars was encountered in a French settlement east of the Mississippi River. Nevertheless, the association of moss and horsehair is not at all strange, especially in view of the fact that moss has long been a substitute for horsehair as a stuffing in upholstered furniture, due to the marked similarity between cured moss and horsehair as to both color and resilience.<sup>19</sup>

From spun horse or cow hair come or came hair ropes; bridles, including reins; halters; and saddle girths; and from moss, saddle blankets and horse collars. It is noteworthy that all articles mentioned are used with horses, and all but the collar with riding horses. Further, these accouterments of the riding horse smack of the cattle industry and Spanish America.

Both age and origin of the spinner with respect to Louisiana are far from certain. The memory of the eldest living person carries the implement back no

<sup>16</sup> Lisandro Sandoval, *Semántica Guatemalense o Diccionario de Guatemaltequismos*, Guatemala, A. C., (1942), p. 484.

<sup>17</sup> Santamaria, *op. cit.*, III, p. 136.

<sup>18</sup> The swampy Atchafalaya Basin (see Fig. 2) is the region of greatest abundance of Spanish moss in the state. West of the Basin are the grassy prairies, where the trees essential to the presence of moss are restricted to narrow band of riverine woods along the major waterways. Proper conditions for moss do not extend westward beyond coastal East Texas. Another species, the so-called "ball" moss, appears in southern coastal Texas and reaches into Mexico. This second species is not adaptable to use as a textile fiber.

<sup>19</sup> See C. C. Aldrich, M. W. DeBlieux, and F. B. Kniffen, "The Spanish Moss Industry of Louisiana," *Economic Geography*, XIX, No. 4, (1943), pp. 347-357.

more than eighty years and the older literature has so far proven sterile. Its restricted distribution in the state, far from proving a recent entrance, shows simply that the spinner had reached the bounds of what has long been a distinctive economic and cultural area. If the age of the cattle industry is any criterion, the spinner could have been in Louisiana by the mid-eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

Assuming from the evidence that the spinner is pretty certainly of Spanish origin, or at least was common in Spanish colonial America, there seem to be two major possibilities to account for its presence in Louisiana: first, that it came into Louisiana after Spain gained title to the area in 1763, directly from the Old World in the hands of immigrant Isleños (Canary Islanders), or from other Spanish colonies in America. More in keeping with the known facts is a second hypothesis, that the spinner came unobtrusively and incidentally with cattle ranching from Spanish Texas. The Louisiana distribution of the device certainly suggests such a conclusion; records indicate that Spanish cattle were driven in from Texas to occupy Louisiana *vacheries* in the eighteenth century. Southwestern Louisiana is still a thoroughgoing cattle country, especially in the coastal marshes. The higher prairie section of this same part of the state was almost exclusively cattle country until the latter decades of the nineteenth century brought in non-French farmers to produce rice commercially. Further, the spinner is still known in Texas, at least in the coastal areas of the state. In extreme southeastern coastal Texas, long inhabited by "coony-French" cattle ranchers, the *tarabi* is named and used as in adjacent parts of Louisiana.<sup>21</sup>

If the second hypothesis be carried through to logical conclusions, one can envision the spinner employed to make from an ever-present material, horsehair, various appurtenances of the range cattle industry, from Chile to Texas, with sporadic adaptations to other media and ends. It is an integral part of the ranching complex developed in Spanish America, and as such is brought in from Texas to southwestern Louisiana. At the forest edge of the grasslands the implement finds some use with a different material, Spanish moss, the substitution suggested by the fact that cured moss resembles horsehair as to both appearance and character. The present erratic distribution of local knowledge concerning the device is the normal pattern of the areally uneven outmoding of technical implements.

Precise knowledge concerning the presence or absence of the spinner in areas between Louisiana and Chile, in other sections of Latin America, and in Spain

<sup>20</sup> J. Frank Dobie, *The Longhorns*, Boston, (1941), p. 9.

<sup>21</sup> Communication from R. E. Jackson, President, The East Texas Big Thicket Association, Silsbee, Texas.

itself would add the data necessary to the elaboration of its history.<sup>22</sup> In itself the spinner is certainly of limited importance, but if and when the details of its origin and spread are known accurately, they may be revealing of a route and mode of culture diffusion that have been important since early colonial days, and possibly back to an even remoter period.

Louisiana State University



<sup>22</sup> During the summer of 1949 the presence of the spinner in both northeastern Nevada and the San Joaquin Valley of California was established. An elderly informant produced a sample of the "whirligig" introduced into northern Nevada by Spanish-American vaqueros from southern California in the early 1880's and used for spinning hair ropes. A middle-aged Spanish Californian of the southern San Joaquin Valley immediately recalled the use of "*tarabillas*" for the same purpose. These new data strengthen the notion that the specific distribution of the spinner may be an excellent marker of the extent of diffusion of the Spanish-American cattle complex in what is now Anglo-America.

## U. S. NAVAL JARGON AND SLANG, 1942-1945\*

by

Eli Sobel

Scandinavian and German scholars, in their broad categories, have long recognized the importance of speech and language to folklore studies. This classification, as well as many other branches of folklore, has found some acceptance in the United States. R. S. Boggs, for example, follows the Europeans, in the realization that folkspeech enhances our knowledge of the life of the people, and he has long insisted that folkspeech, slang and jargon, are part and parcel of folklore. A special section of his annual bibliography is devoted to such material.

The great Feilberg dictionary of the folkspeech of Jutland is not merely a dictionary of folkspeech—the lore is imbedded in the terms; the larger folkloristic objective must certainly come to mind. After reading an article like G. D. Chase, "Sea Terms that Have Come Ashore,"<sup>1</sup> one knows more about the folkloristic implications of occupational language. W. D. Hand in "The Folklore, Customs, and Traditions of the Butte Miner,"<sup>2</sup> placing the miner in the mining community, lists nicknames; the names themselves are often revelatory. In naval jargon and slang the terms themselves give insights through which the life and habits of the sailors may be learned.

H. L. Mencken, in an article on war words,<sup>3</sup> supports the thesis that the folklorist should be interested in studying service jargon and slang. He considers them a nascent stage of potential folkspeech. In observing the survivals of World War I, Mencken remarks that war words enjoy folk currency only in war times and hence lack continuity of tradition.

Several other articles have appeared since the war's end which deal with Army-Navy jargon and slang. None has yet appeared which distinguishes the jargon of the citizen Navy from that of the regular Navy.<sup>4</sup> This paper, based

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\* Paper read at the Popular Literature Section of the Modern Language Association Meeting held in New York City on December 27-29, 1948.

<sup>1</sup> G. D. Chase, "Sea Terms that Have Come Ashore," *New England Quarterly*, Vol. XIV (1941), pp. 272-291.

<sup>2</sup> W. D. Hand, "The Folklore, Customs, and Traditions of the Butte Miner," *California Folklore Quarterly*, Vol. V, No. 1 (January, 1946), pp. 1-23, and Vol. V, No. 2 (April, 1946), pp. 153-178.

<sup>3</sup> H. L. Mencken, "War Words in England," *American Speech*, Vol. XIX (1944), pp. 3-15.

<sup>4</sup> J. L. Riordan, "American Naval 'Slangue' in the Pacific in 1945," *California Folklore Quarterly*, Vol. V, No. 4 (October, 1946), pp. 375-390. C. D. Chrétien, "Comments on Naval Slang," *Western Folklore*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (April, 1947), pp. 157-162.

on Navy duty afloat and ashore, attempts to show how one may distinguish the "regular" from the "reserve" and to incorporate many words and phrases hitherto unrecorded. Here is an example of how one can distinguish "regular" from "reserve." I have found recorded the phrase "fouled up like an ensign's sea-bag." Only the true *feather-merchant* (more on feather-merchant later) would consider the phrase "salty." The regular ensign would never have a sea-bag, would never have had to pack and stow his gear in a sea-bag. That the reserve should create such a phrase may be traced to the old Navy phrases "fouled up like a Filipino at fire-drill" or "fouled up like a Filipino drawing small stores." These adequately demonstrate the change between the new and the old. In the old Navy almost all mess attendants were from the Philippine Islands, knew little English, and could, therefore, easily give rise to the idea of confusion.

To separate further the regular from the reserve: only the reserve would include such phrases as "Charley Noble," "bumboat," sea-lawyer," etc., as fitting to be identified as slang. These and hundreds of others may be found in the glossaries of the official U. S. Navy publications and other nautical volumes. Let us take rather the unattested jargon, for here are the true naval colloquialisms. A review of a typical day at sea should give us a good sampling.

The sailor (never "gob"), having been *crapped-out*, *flaked-out*, *in the sack*, or *calibrating his bed-springs*, arises and prepares for the day's routine. The phrase "calibrating his bed-springs" was current before World War II; but with the introduction of radar, the antenna of which often resembled bed-springs, the association of ideas gained a more material aspect. Breakfast will be served with the usual civilian service items like *canned cow*, *spuds*, *red-lead*, etc., but maybe will include *S.O.S.*—unprintable, but I have seen the letters translated in an Army slang article as "Snow on Shingles." Always there is *Joe* or *jamoke* (coffee), *jamoke* being preferred by the *regulars* although the coffee urn or pot is always the *joe-pot*.

Not being on the 8 to 12 watch, the sailor may have a choice of activities. If he heads for sick-bay at sick-call, he may go with various complaints; perhaps it is simply *the crud*, an all-inclusive term for athlete's foot, the hives, impetigo, ring-worm, etc. The "reserve" will probably refer to the medical staff as "chancre-mechanics" or "sawbones." The "regular" will probably call the chief pharmacist's mate "the surgeon" and all others "Doc" or "Mary." A man may complain of having *the Chinese rot* (diarrhoea) or that he is *getting Asiatic* (equivalent to the Army expression "bucking for a Section 8"). Perhaps the most picturesque of the medical slang is the old navy name for a hemorrhoidectomy—to *get bore-sighted*. When the men strained at the ropes and oars this was a frequent Navy disability. To bore-sight, to align the gun barrel with the

sights, soon was transferred to the physician's examination with the proctoscope.

If not to sick-bay, our sailor, if a "regular," will go down to the *gyp-joint* (the ship's store) for some *pogey-bait* (candy). A word on pogey: pogey equals old Navy for a pink-cheeked lad on his first cruise. The word, originally, as taken into Navy jargon (not meaning a variety of fish but possibly arising from it), had a lascivious connotation. Hence pogey-bait for candy. To digress from the store: in addition to the word pogey-bait, there are two old Navy phrases with a similar connotation: "to go below to see the dead marine" or "to go below to see the golden rivet"—the rivet possibly dating the phrase as after the days of wooden ships but before the modern welded hull. The fact that rivets were used in wooden ships and are used even today makes it difficult to give this phrase a date of invention.

If not interested in the items in the store, our sailor may walk over to the *gedunk-stand* (soda fountain) and purchase a *gedunk* (ice-cream frozen in a cup or other container). The term *gedunk* probably became part of Navy jargon in the 1920's when Carl Ed began to use the term in his comic strip "Harold Teen." During World War II the larger ships (those which had such luxuries as a *gedunk-stand*) were called the "ice-cream Navy" by the "saltier" crews of the smaller ships.

Now ready for his watch, the sea-going man may be ready for a great variety of duties. If he is a member of the *black-gang* or engineering division, he is, in old Navy talk, a *snipe*. All engineers—officers, petty officers, or non-rated men are *snipes*.

If in one of the deck divisions and non-rated, the *deck-ape* (deck-aide) takes up his broom or paint brush. The rated deck-aide is a coxswain (if third-class petty officer) or *boats'un's* mate if higher. Some regulars pronounce the word with the *t* sounded, a pronunciation not recorded in Webster. This is the senior rate of the seaman branch and hence the object of jealousy among the other *right-arm* or *left-arm* rates. So, the rating of boatswain's mate is usually followed by the comment "strong back and weak mind."

If on a carrier, the *plane-pushers* (flight deck crew) take over to ready the planes for the *airdales* (pilots and pilots only). Among Navy pilots "to drive" is synonymous with "to fly," as in "I'll drive that bomber." The non-commissioned flying personnel get *flight-skins* (*skins* taken directly from the civilian slang for money). Flight skins are considered a great boon and usually cause a separation, socially, between flying and non-flying crew—often manifested on board by which group joined which poker or dice game.

One group aboard, the mess attendants or steward's mates, was called collectively *gooks*. Again, since in the old Navy almost all were Filipinos with heavily

accented English, the name probably came from: "What is your duty?"—"I am a gook" (cook). Later, during World War II, the name gook was applied to all the island natives in the Pacific area, even to the Japanese on certain islands like Saipan and Okinawa.<sup>5</sup>

The *pencil-pusher* (yeoman) has his official files, but the Navy afloat has one unfillable file under several names. Something to be jettisoned, forgotten, or ignored is filed in the *circular file* (waste-paper basket), the *blue room* (the sea), or the *outboard locker* (sea). Only an *eager beaver*, once described as one who strives to get ahead through honest effort, would not resort to the use of these favorite files. The truly capable, qualified man will be spoken of as one who can *cut the mustard*, or, if he is thought incapable of performing a certain task, it will be said of him, "He can't cut the mustard." This is straight from the rural mid-west, attesting the American lore that the old Navy was populated by farm boys. The eager beaver may usually be found *banging ears* (currying favor, boot-licking) with some senior rate or officer. If the officer is senior enough, the visor of his cap will be embellished with *scrambled eggs* (gold embroidery in a regulation pattern). If he is an admiral's aide, he will be wearing his *chicken guts* (aiguillettes) on formal occasions, definitely old Navy, just like *swabs* (epaulettes) which were not worn during World War II.

On a battleship one always finds some *bell-hops* (Marine) or, more fully, *sea-going bell-hops*. Contrary to the usual explanation that Marines are called bell-hops because of their uniforms, I believe that the term derived from that routine duty always assigned Marines on board a battleship; they man all the orderly and sentry posts. Thus, for the captain, executive officer and flag officers (if on board) the Marines would be performing a variety of true bell-hop duties.

In connection with mention of battleship: The U. S. S. California is always known to the regulars as the *Prune Barge* and her crew as *prune-pickers*, a reference to the days of her launching and an appeal from the Navy for an all-California crew to man her.

Our day at sea is almost over and all hands are preparing for liberty. Some sailor may be *gouging* (cheating) to get his liberty-card. In midshipman school to be caught gouging is reason enough to be *bilged-out* (flunked out of school,

<sup>5</sup> Since this article was written, an interesting parallel has appeared in an article by H. L. Mencken, "Postscripts to the American Language: Video Verbiage," *The New Yorker*, December 11, 1948 (Vol. XXIV, No. 42), pp. 102-105. On p. 102 he says, "What are the fans to be called? . . . I'd add *gook* from the German (and Yiddish) *gucken*—to look, to peep or peer—but the Marines long ago adopted it (though by some other etymological route) to designate a Filipino, and during World War II it was extended to include any indigene of the South Pacific."



dismissed—an Academy term).<sup>6</sup> All hands begin to stow all the *gismos* (what-you-may-call-it, but sometimes used particularly in reference to parts of the female anatomy—definitely old Navy) and then the *scuttle-butt* (rumors, unfounded reports) begins to build up about the port. And so the question begins to circulate: “What’s the riddle?” (What’s the word on it?) One who is notorious for “putting out the word” may even be called Riddle. With the crew convinced that the *old man* (captain) will authorize liberty, the boys begin to *spaff off* (polish, shine, press) their uniforms, shoes, etc. The shower-bath and shave are usually followed by liberal application of *fou-fou* (after-shave talc, lotions, pomades, etc.). Now the sailor is ready to talk about the women ashore—and here it is hard to tell the landlubber from the salt. As the talk begins of a known girl, one is sure to hear, “You ain’t about to date her,” the “ain’t about to” being used in many situations with the connotation that the person has not a remote chance or opportunity. This phrase is *not* old Navy but was very frequent in the fleet. A date which is assured or a well-defined liberty plan will usually be greeted with the old Navy phrase of approbation, *no pain, no strain*, or, in variant form, *feeling no pain*, the *no strain* being implied. The physical description of one’s dream girl may be accompanied by the phrase *she’s bluff in the counter*. This is taken directly from the official Navy recognition manual describing the silhouette of certain type vessels. To use the phrase in reference to a female would imply the female form divine. Perhaps the most archaic jargon I encountered was in conversation with a Warrant Carpenter of about twenty year’s service. In referring to a well-known movie star, he remarked, “I would like to bend her on like an old organ [ Oregon ] boot.” When I questioned him about the phrase, the “bend on” (nautical for to knot, connect or join) was easily explained, but he had no idea of what “organ [ Oregon ] boot” might mean. Here is a survival of old Navy—the reference to the old torture instrument fastened to the leg and foot. Hence, to my shipmate, the phrase meant “to hitch up with in undivoriceable fashion.”

With the crew going over the side, the officer of the deck may give a last warning, “Remember, men, no *smoke-stacking* or it’s five days *p. and p.*” (bread and water). The smoke-stacking is old Navy for a sailor who comes rolling

<sup>6</sup> Hanson W. Baldwin, military editor of the *New York Times*, who was a midshipman at the Naval Academy and a naval officer from 1920-1927, has supplied me with the following addendum: “. . . at Annapolis the term ‘bilged-out’ definitely meant to be flunked out of school for deficiencies in studies. To be caught ‘gouging’ or ‘cheating’ was an occasion for dismissal. But a midshipman was not ‘bilged-out’ under such circumstances. Cheating was a dishonorable offense. ‘Bilging-out’ represented a deficiency in studies but was not dishonorable. The distinction was very carefully made.” I am indebted to Mr. Baldwin for this and several other suggestions.



aboard as the nastiest, toughest, saltiest man ashore or afloat—and also the drunkest. And here is where smoke-stacking takes its most derisive meaning: to be truly smoke-stacking, one has had *a* beer or “smelled the cork.” In other words, not really drunk, but putting on too good a show. The *p. and p.* is still a legal form of punishment in the brig. Unfortunately, the terms for which the letters stand, as with many Navy phrases, are inelegant.

Now to return to our feather-merchant. The regular Navy distinguished as a feather-merchant one who was literally handed a rank or rate and then given a short course called indoctrination (how to tell an admiral from an ensign, etc.). In other words, the specialist, the man unqualified for any except special duty, is a feather-merchant. The appellation is from the civilian, having become widespread in the late 'thirties by the cast of Billy de Beck's comic strip, “Barney Google and Snuffy Smith.”

Feather-merchant jargon or slang has taken hold in the Navy to some extent. Such words as *zoomie* for *airedale*, “What's the pitch?” for “What's the riddle?”, *torps* for the old Navy *fish* (torpedoes), may or may not survive.

To conclude our day in the Navy, our sailor probably rolls back aboard, having *made a liberty*, mouthing a civilian phrase: *hubba hubba* (“What a liberty!”).<sup>7</sup> But the regular's last words will probably be, “Wake me when I make commodore.” This phrase is a respectable item in any folklorist's list of words and phrases meaning *never*. It can definitely be dated after the abolition of the rank of commodore in the late nineteenth century. With the restoration of the rank in World War II the phrase gradually lost currency.

*University of California at Los Angeles*

<sup>7</sup> *Hubba hubba* is probably not a Polynesian reiterative as Riordan believes (*op. cit.*, p. 385). The words are as American as baseball, being, in fact, used by baseball coaches for many years as a name for a warm-up scrum—sometimes called “playing pepper.” The old Navy has adopted some Samoan words, *moo-moo* (elephantiasis) being the best known in the Pacific area.

## TALL TALK AND FOLK SAYINGS IN BILL ARP'S WORKS

by

Margaret Gillis Figh

The examples of folk speech cited in this article are taken from the writings of Bill Arp (Charles H. Smith), the Southern humorist who in his newspaper columns and books recorded types, manners, and customs present in Georgia during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The author began writing under the guise of a Cracker philosopher; but early in his career he subordinated this character to a minor role, retaining for himself the pseudonym, Bill Arp. He had a keen ear for folk speech; and his works reveal many illustrations of tall talk, rustic imagery, and sayings.

Like a number of contemporary humorists, Smith started by imitating Longstreet's *Georgia Scenes*; and in his first sketches, pioneer tall talk is much in evidence. For instance the disparaging comparison was one of his favorite devices. He frequently likened a small, aggressive man to a feist dog. A typical comment, unfavorable to both character and physical appearance, was that an individual was "one of those mean little fice dog sort of men."<sup>1</sup> The cracker known as the original Bill Arp boasted in reference to a rival who was spoiling for a fight, "I'm no phist puppy dog that he should come out of his district to bully me."<sup>2</sup> Again the writer quoted an emphatic Southern partisan as saying that "before he'd pull a trigger for Thad Stevens, he'd have his soul transmigrated to a bench leged fice and bark at his daddy's mules two thousand years."<sup>3</sup>

Arp frequently indulged in the copious flow of derisive epithets typical of tall talk. Northern Reconstruction politicians were "heartless, soulless, bowelless, gizzardless, fratricidal, suicidal, parasidal, sistercidal, abominable, contemptibul, disgustabal individuals."<sup>4</sup> One of these politicians was particularly singled out as the object of attack through the medium of gross exaggeration in the query, "How is Bill Seward? I heard that a mad dog bit him the other day and the dog died immediately."<sup>5</sup> And it was no doubt a Yankee to whom Bill

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<sup>1</sup> Charles H. Smith, *Bill Arp, So Called, A Side Show of the Sunny Side of War*, New York, 1886, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Charles H. Smith, *The Farm and the Fireside*, Atlanta, 1891, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 152.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

referred when he said, "I hated a man so bad once that all the hair cum off my head and the man drown'd himself in a hog waller that night."<sup>6</sup>

The abusive language of one of the Northern leaders, he said, was "worse than a squirt gun full of kow slop."<sup>7</sup> Bill showed that he could defend himself with equally eloquent language. "I ain't no giant-killer," he commented, "I ain't no Norwegian bar. I ain't no boar constrictor, but I'll be horn-swoggled iff the talkin' and the writin' and the slanderin' has got to be all done on one side any longer."<sup>8</sup> He ominously warned his enemies elsewhere that "them chickens will come home to roost some of these days,"<sup>9</sup> and his summary of the situation between the two contending sections was, "If the whole thing was simmered down it would make about a half pint of humbug."<sup>10</sup>

Compound appellations are sprinkled throughout Arp's tirades against his Northern foes. In his milder moments he spoke of them as blue-bellies, or more often as blue-tailed flies. He deplored the fact that he could not harmonize when he sang, "the melancholy chorus of the blue tailed fly."<sup>11</sup> The allusion here, no doubt, was to the Union soldier's uniforms which prompted their being designated by the title of the popular old minstrel song, "The Blue Tailed Fly." Among other derisive or abusive epithets, "suck-egg dog," "hyener" and "buzzard" were applied to the Yankees;<sup>12</sup> and once a Cracker vented his spleen upon another by addressing him as "you lyin' old dirtdauber."<sup>13</sup>

Bill Arp was especially bitter against *Harper's Weekly*, which he accused of "a-gassin' lies and slanders in every issue—Makin' insulting picters in every sheet—breedin' everlastin' discord and chawin' bigger than ever since we got licked."<sup>14</sup> The courage of the Southern soldiers, however, was praised with the comment, "Our boys here carry their sand in their gizzards,"<sup>15</sup> and of their ardor wrote, "Most of them are so hot that they fairly siz when you pour water on them and that's the way they make up their military companies. When a man applies to join the volunteers, they sprinkle him, and if he sizzes they take him, and if he don't, they don't."<sup>16</sup> These loyal Southerners, according to Arp, would

<sup>6</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 133.

<sup>7</sup> Charles H. Smith, *Peace Papers*, New York, 1884, p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 113.

<sup>9</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 151.

<sup>10</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 135.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>12</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 151.

<sup>13</sup> "Bill Arp's Weekly Letter," *The Atlanta Constitution*, Dec. 6, 1885.

<sup>14</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 144.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

"eat roots and drink branch water the balance of time before they will kernowly to your abolition dynasty." <sup>17</sup>

Showing his disdain of the Bostonians' ignorance, he wrote, "They don't know no more about the hire of a nigger than the ox knows the man that will tan his hide,"<sup>18</sup> and he scornfully asserted that the Northerners had "drawed the elephant in the lottery and don't know what to do with him."<sup>19</sup> In one of his letters he complained that they "had set the dogs on us" and further that he "hoped that the South-haters would call off the dogs but they are still blowing the same old horn."<sup>20</sup> Later in desperation he ended another letter with this parting outburst, "The thing has happened. The dog is ded."<sup>21</sup> Still using animal analogy, he described the situation between the two sections. "They bellered and we pawed dirt. They punched us in the cage and we growled. They put tacks under our saddles and we kicked."<sup>22</sup> The same metaphor was employed in his assertion of his own reaction to continued ill treatment. "I golly," said Bill emphatically, "we'll take the studs and go backwards."<sup>23</sup> He also proudly assured his enemies that he was not asking for "any one-horse, short-winded pardon."<sup>24</sup>

Disapproval of the way a convention of Georgia editors was conducted found vent in the following homely analogy. Of Hulbert, the leader, he said:

He reminds one of a pig runnin' off with a year of corn and all the litter squealin' after him. . . . Then the fur flies and hides are put on a pole. . . . Hulbert got the editors in the cautious state. They whispered, "Cat in the meal tub," and he hollowed back IRON. They went along as gently as a drove of hogs following a leaky corn wagon. . . . Hulbert had a devil of a time for there was a few barrows along that were hard to tole, but he toled 'em. He did certain. And they eat his corn.<sup>25</sup>

The saying "cat in the meal tub" in the above quotation evidently is a variant upon the proverbial "nigger in the wood pile" and Shakespeare's "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark."

Arp used many more similes and sayings which reflect the interests, attitudes,

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>18</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 169.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>20</sup> "Bill Arp's Weekly Letter," *Centreville* [Alabama] Press. Sept. 20, 1900.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 18, 1891.

<sup>22</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 144.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>24</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 134.

<sup>25</sup> "Bill Arp's Weekly Letter," *Bluff City Times*, [Eufaula], Sept. 30, 1869.

and background of the rural South in the 1800's. One of his friends "snored like a horse pullin' his foot out of the mud."<sup>26</sup> Another snorer "sawed gourds so that it was after mid-night before we got to sleep."<sup>27</sup> He was once startled by a man who "slaped his first in his hand like poppin' a wagon whip."<sup>28</sup> The road to his house was "as dry as a powder horn."<sup>29</sup> His pocket book when he had finished buying family supplies "looked like an elephant had trod on it."<sup>30</sup> After a startling statement in the meeting of an assembly "the silence was so immense you could have heard a flea jump in the saw-dust on the floor, if there had been one in the house."<sup>31</sup> In his youth he wore "pants as tight as an eel skin."<sup>32</sup> Once he had a boil "as big as a ginny egg."<sup>33</sup> He bore his troubles "like an Injun."<sup>34</sup> He worked hard and fast "like killing snakes."<sup>35</sup> The Rome newspapers did not contain "as much information as two jay birds' nests."<sup>36</sup> The Arps had a voracious cousin, who "could eat as much and as often as a nigger's houn'."<sup>37</sup> Bill fled once "like a yellow jacket's nest had broke loose."<sup>38</sup>

Arp enlivened his letters with folk wisdom expressed in terms of his local background. Instead of the generally accepted sayings, "Let the best man win," his version was, "I would let the man with the longest pole knock down the persimmons."<sup>39</sup> Rather than saying, "The Lord will provide," when expressing his faith in omnipotent interest in himself and his family, Cobe, the Cracker, was quoted as affirming his trust with, "The Lord never sent a possum into the world but what he planted a simmon tree close by."<sup>40</sup> A rural environment is also the basis of the admonition, "I'm afraid you are taking in more ground than you can tend,"<sup>41</sup> and of the comment, "No telling the luck of a lousy calf."<sup>42</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 166.

<sup>27</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 217.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>29</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 83.

<sup>30</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 32.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>32</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 291.

<sup>33</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 218.

<sup>34</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 147.

<sup>35</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 198.

<sup>36</sup> "Bill Arp's Weekly Letter," *Bluff City Times*, Sept. 30, 1869.

<sup>37</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 217.

<sup>38</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 175.

<sup>39</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 271.

<sup>40</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 28.

<sup>41</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 28.

<sup>42</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 101.

Among other sayings expressing the folk point of view are the following:

As fond of simmons as a possum<sup>43</sup>

As poor as Lazerus<sup>44</sup>

As meek as Moses<sup>45</sup>

As high as Haman's gallows<sup>46</sup>

As poor as gully dirt<sup>47</sup>

strut like a peacock<sup>48</sup>

took like the small pox<sup>49</sup>

As limber as a greasy rag<sup>50</sup>

pokes its head out like a catawampus.<sup>51</sup>

quicker than you can lick your tongue out<sup>52</sup>

as wide as a soap trough<sup>53</sup>

as humble as a dead nigger<sup>54</sup>

move like a blacksnake<sup>55</sup>

buzz around like bumble bees<sup>56</sup>

write like a school master<sup>57</sup>

standing like a crane on a sandhill<sup>58</sup>

As lively and gay as a colt in a meadow<sup>59</sup>

sweatin' like a run-down filly<sup>60</sup>

like a sick frog watchin' for rain<sup>61</sup>

A frog as big as a peck measure<sup>62</sup>

run like a mud turtle<sup>63</sup>

blowin' worse than a tired steer<sup>64</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 124.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

<sup>45</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 345.

<sup>46</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 345.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 335.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 335.

<sup>49</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 155.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>53</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 200.

<sup>54</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 30.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 264.

<sup>56</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 162.

<sup>57</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 103.

<sup>58</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 57.

<sup>59</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 308.

<sup>60</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 172.

<sup>61</sup> *Peace Papers*, p. 225.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>63</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 129.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

going to and fro like a fiddler's elbow<sup>65</sup>  
 As tired as an old dray horse<sup>66</sup>  
 like a pig in a china shop<sup>70</sup>  
 As hollow as an empty bee gum<sup>68</sup>  
 When you trade with a man, trust nothing to conscience.<sup>69</sup>  
 Set a rogue to catch a rogue.<sup>70</sup>  
 Oh that don't amount to anything. It's college talk.<sup>71</sup>  
 Blame my jacket if it ain't enuf to make your head swim.<sup>72</sup>  
 You only see the sugar and honey side of him.<sup>73</sup>  
 I don't think you tote fair.<sup>74</sup>  
 Shorten your sights.<sup>75</sup>  
 We are not whipped yet—not by three or four jugfuls.<sup>76</sup>  
 I'll swap horses with him some of these days and he'll think thunder and  
 lightnin' struck him.<sup>77</sup>  
 My wife hasn't got back into the traces yet.<sup>78</sup>  
 Then the big pot orter be put into the little one and everyone rejoice.<sup>79</sup>  
 I'll wager a dead horse.<sup>80</sup>  
 We resolved . . . to paddle our own canoe.<sup>81</sup>  
 Joe Brown can swap horses and ride 'em all.<sup>82</sup>  
 I'd rather see a bully get a lickin' than eat sugar.<sup>83</sup>  
 Well, it's none of their fuss or funeral.<sup>84</sup>  
 There's nothing that wears breeches that's half so honest as the wag of my  
 dog's tail.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 151.

<sup>66</sup> "Bill Arp's Weekly Letter," *Centreville Press*, Oct. 11, 1900.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 356.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 302.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 328.

<sup>71</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 137.

<sup>72</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 134.

<sup>73</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 134.

<sup>74</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 147.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 148.

<sup>76</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 115.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 357.

<sup>78</sup> "Bill Arp's Weekly Letter," *Centreville Press*, Oct. 11, 1900.

<sup>79</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 81.

<sup>80</sup> *Bill Arp, So Called*, p. 68.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>82</sup> *Bibb County Blade* [Centreville, Ala.], Nov. 1, 1883.

<sup>83</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 33.

<sup>84</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 356.

<sup>85</sup> *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, p. 73.

"Fight the devil with fire" is my motto.<sup>86</sup>

A man's foresight ain't as good as his hindsight.<sup>87</sup>

But poor folks for chillun and poor folks for twins.<sup>88</sup>

I'll comb the cuckle burs outen my hair and take my foot in my hand and go.<sup>89</sup>

The frequency with which Bill Arp employed these sayings in his writings indicates that they were a part of the every day talk that he heard and liked to record. They embody the realism, the humor, and the common-sense philosophy current among his farmer neighbors; and, with the other vigorous imagery in his works, they show a type of folk speech characteristic of his era and his locality.

*Huntingdon College*

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<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>89</sup> *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 101.



## BOOK REVIEWS

*Ozark Folksongs*, Vols. I-III, collected and edited by Vance Randolph. The State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri: 1946-1949. pp. 439, 436, 399. \$15.00 for the set of four volumes.

With three of the four volumes of this collection now published, it appears that the folk of Missouri and the Ozarks will make Appalachia look to its laurels. Nearly fifty years of collecting has produced a bumper crop. Starting in 1903 Professor Belden and the Missouri Folk-Lore Society combed their state, and for the last twenty-five years Vance Randolph has operated as a one-man folk-lore society for the Ozark country—the highlands of southern Missouri, northern Arkansas, and eastern Oklahoma. The findings of the former, given out piecemeal from time to time, culminated belatedly in the 1940 *Ballads and Songs Collected by the Missouri Folk-Lore Society*, of which Belden's learned editorship made more than a mere collection. His notes and references often penetrate to origins and trace the intricacies of transmission, thus adding to our knowledge of individual pieces and of folksong in general.

Vance Randolph's *Ozark Folksongs* is chiefly a collection as such, and a rich one. Its fullness no doubt is possible only because the editor has made the Ozarks his own. As he tells us elsewhere, he has lived not in a library but in the villages and hollers; he has fished, fought, hunted, danced, and gambled—chewed tobacco, dabbled in local politics, and solicited "locals" for newspapers. He has absorbed folklore through the rind, and in earlier books has pictured in detail the life and lore of which these songs form a part. Already 594 songs have been given, with many more variants, from a collection of 900. This alone is a record achievement, and taken with Belden's puts us in possession of an unrivalled store for an American region.

The very amplitude of the collection may disturb some folklorists. It is hard to call everything here "folksong." We have Child ballads, "some later importations," songs about murderers and outlaws, western songs and ballads, songs of the Civil War, Negro and pseudo-Negro songs, temperance songs, songs "in a lighter vein," and play-party songs. We have a copious inventory of folk or popular memory, but if folksong connotes something more than memory (even if inaccurate), then many of the songs from the temperance crusades, minstrel and medicine shows, gentlemen officers of the Confederate army, and various other professional, semi-pro, and amateur minstrels would not be described as folksongs. Certainly though, this collection has much that is folksong by any

definition, and it encompasses the broader song-culture or song-complex in which folksong is embodied. Folksong and what may loosely be called popular song for centuries have crossed and recrossed, and if this collection is not all folksong proper it certainly shows the kind of company that folksong has kept, and it shows the popular unconcern for the boundaries which the folklorist may try to distinguish. Here we have side by side the reverberations of tradition and the idioms of passing interests, just as in the popular mind the enduring emotions and superstitions and a shifting sense of fact have mingled in suspension.

It is difficult, of course, to know how inclusive to be in collecting, for the complete inventory of popular memory would count vast quantities of commercial songmaking, much of it quickly forgotten in detail if not in mannerisms. Yet we may ask: if "The Bonnie Blue Flag" (No. 214), composed and sung widely by Henry Macarthy, "the Arkansas Comedian," published in 1861 and given in a "standard text" in many subsequent songbooks, and described as the most popular of Confederate battlesongs except "Dixie," is a folksong, is "Dixie"? And is it the fame of Stephen Foster which excludes his songs from the folk category while the lesser known works of lesser known or unknown authors are admitted?

These are questions that are, I suppose, of more concern to the theorist than to the collector, whose function is to bring us the grain of the field and not necessarily to flail, grind, or sack it. Whatever the answers, a collection like this raises again the tantalizing and perplexing problems of the workings of oral transmission. In many cases, we have songs that seem to be petrified on low levels of literary convention, as in many of the western, sentimental, and criminal ballads. They have no "give" to them, no elasticity—they retain the feel of a stiff and striving individual effort at expression even when they all sound alike. They seem to be remembered merely, without having their jagged edges rounded off by the eddyings of tradition. On the other hand, in many of the negro songs, light and humorous songs, and ballads of British origin, even though the hands of Emmett, Foster, Work, and their anonymous colleagues of the minstrel and medicine shows and of the ballad and songster press have had some part in shaping convention, and though there are echoes from the music hall, vaudeville stage, and gospel singing, yet the passage through many ears and minds has broken down many of the particular components and allowed them to reform. Widely distributed and freely handled, they have a plastic feel, a reliance on commonplaces. They echo children's ditties, game songs, work songs, Child ballads and others of European origin; and like them they often lose their particularity of situation and phraseology. They have more of effortless iterative formula and less of self-conscious utilization of convention—if these terms con-

vey anything—than the previous group. Compare, for instance, the effect of tradition in "Young Edmond" (No. 140), "Pretty Polly" (153), "Frankie and Johnny" (159), "Don't You Grieve After Me" (257), "The Old Gray Horse" (271), "The Crow Song" (275), "The Paper of Pins" (354), "I'm Going Away to Texas" (363), and "I Wish I Was Single Again" (365) with the part of stereotype in "McFee's Confession" (133), "Fair Fanny Moore" (141), "Poor Oma Wise" (149), "The Dying Cowboy" (188), "Bill Vanero" (199), and "The Drunkard's Dream" (307).

In the face of so many songs and their variants it is impossible here to discuss them individually. The texts give every appearance of careful and accurate transcription from identified informants. Presumably all omissions represent lapses in memory or record, though there are a few cases where apparently *causa pudoris* the rhymes to words like *ditch* are left to what could hardly be called the imagination. (Incidentally, the collection is so remarkably decent in language and subject matter that one begins to speculate about suppressed lines or whole songs.) Aside from the many new exemplars of ballads widely known, including some 150 variants of forty-one of Child's, there are some of British origin that are rare in America; e.g., Child 63, 173, 226, and 279 (all fragments); a reworking of the theme of Child 277 (No. 398); "The Sailor Boy," derived from an eighteenth-century broadside (No. 88); "Keep Your Garden Clean" (No. 90), from "The Seeds of Love"; and "Botany Bay" (No. 96). Of the older ballads, the Ozark specimens are in pretty good shape, many of them remarkably so, and quite naturally some have disintegrated. The American pieces, too, are uneven in quality; of them there are a considerable number that are rare or unique. The music is given for probably half the items; again there are good tunes and poor. While the music is no doubt accurately transcribed in a limited sense, I should say that the notation of it has missed the subtleties and nuances of actual performance, and it is, by the way, poorly printed, both for appearance and convenience of reading.

If the texts are the thing, there are other rewards in these volumes. Mr. Randolph's prefatory notes on collecting are shrewd and charming, and his brief notes introducing the broad groups are generally astute in an unacademic way. Headnote commentaries on the texts are sparing, but at times quite informative. The headnote references to other exemplars, though brought up to date, should be taken as selective rather than complete; I should be inclined to criticize them for an isolationist character in neglecting adequately to note their British currency. There is an extensive bibliography, from which one misses a number of titles like the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, Chappell's *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, Karpeles' *Folk Songs from Newfoundland*, Barry's *Maine*

*Woods Songster*, and Neely's *Tales and Songs of Southern Illinois*. For further information about manuscript collections and dissertations on Ozark folklore, one may turn to the article by Vance Randolph and Frances Emberson, "The Collection of Folk Music in the Ozarks," *JAF*, LX (1947), 115-125, which also points to still untapped fields in the region.

The volumes have been edited by Floyd C. Shoemaker and Frances G. Emberson for the State Historical Society of Missouri, which has provided a generous format. The Ozark settings and personalities are pleasantly illustrated by Thomas Hart Benton's endpapers and Mr. Randolph's photographs of informants, a folksy lot in aprons and full skirts, overalls and battered hats, seen posed against their houses, fields, and fences, or going naturally about their chores. Altogether the series so far presents a splendid collection of traditional survivals as well as of "material which demonstrates the manifold loyalties and interests of the region," with religious and journalistic pieces yet to come. We may conclude with thanks for what already is given and a prayer for copious indexing of the same in the last volume.

Branford P. Millar

*Michigan State College*

*Legends of Paul Bunyan*, edited by Harold W. Felton. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1947. xxi, 418. \$5.00.

It is almost forty years since James MacGillivray's "Round River Drive" introduced Paul Bunyan to the printed page. Since then the yarns of Paul have undergone redaction, revision, and transmogrification into almost every conceivable form. In the constant reworking of old material and infusions of the new, the hero of old oral tradition, rooted in the dual heritage of Yankee and backwoods folkways, has all but disappeared. From the original shrewd and mighty lumberjack whose triumphs over natural terrors rewarded his partisans with comic release from fear, Paul Bunyan has been transformed into a national symbol of size, strength, and acumen. The original Bunyan, reflecting the intense but limited folk life of the lumbercamps, has been outgrown. The new giant has won far more widespread acceptance, but with this gain there has been a loss and many changes. The loss is the intensity of the original folktales, and the changes are in Paul's character, humor and activities, which have necessarily been enlarged to appeal to a wider circle of enthusiasts than the isolated woodsmen alone. Paul Bunyan has become our most popular contemporary folk hero. The literature about him is fantastically widespread; some of its most important

selections are hidden away in obscure and transient periodicals, or sealed on unreleased recordings in the folklore archive of the Library of Congress. For years both the scholar and the general reader have craved an anthology in which the best of this literature might be presented, and from whose selections some judgment of its merits could be based.

At last an anthology has appeared: Harold Felton's mammoth compendium of the "legends" of Paul Bunyan. The dimensions of this book are commensurate with those of its subject. It measures 108 anecdotes and a big bibliography between the covers, and its covers are heavy boards of forest green. Mr. Felton has ransacked odd corners of the library to unearth several selections from newspaper columns of the 1920's, and from little-known or defunct periodicals. Much of this material has been virtually inaccessible till now, and all followers of Paul Bunyan owe Messrs. Felton and Knopf a debt of gratitude for making it available. Physically the book is sumptuous: immense type, rich paper, many illustrations in color.

This being said, however, any serious student of the Bunyan stories and the American folktale will find much to regret in the choice of selections, the general arrangement, and the editorial method of this anthology. The great bulk of its material comes from various popularizations of the original folktales; from Mr. Felton's choices one could scarcely trace the changing concept of the hero through the mutations suggested above. The editor has limited his selections for the most part to stories of Paul in the lumbering and construction industries; the reader of these *Legends* would never guess the extent to which tales of prowess in farming, ranching, mining, and railroading became attached to Paul Bunyan's name. Contribution from the oil fields are given a scant four pages. And the gradual shift in the nature of "Paul's Cleverality" from inventiveness to the shrewdness of the entrepreneur is not to be traced in this book.

The author most frequently represented here is James Stevens, whose thirteen offerings take up 76 pages, or one-fifth of the anthology.<sup>1</sup> Since Stevens is the most prolific of the popularizers, and everyone interested in Bunyan at all has read his books, it seems to me that some of that space might have been used more profitably to present less familiar material. For instance, there is but one short anecdote from Ida Virginia Turney's *Paul Bunyan Comes West*; long out of print, this was the first book to be published about Paul after W. B. Laug-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stevens also provides a six-page "Old Logger's Foreword," which contains a reconstruction of Bunyan tale-telling far closer to actual oral tradition than any of his own offerings. Incidentally, in this introduction he contradicts his previous accounts of how the Bunyan tales were recited in the lumbercamps. (See James Stevens, *Paul Bunyan*, New York, p. 6.)

head's advertising pamphlets. There are seventeen selections from Dell J. McCormick and Wallace Wadsworth, but only four from Esther Shepherd, to whose work they and many of the other authors represented here owe a great, though often unacknowledged, debt. Glen Rounds, surely a more imaginative writer and firmer stylist than any of the foregoing, rates but two samples. Frank Shay, whose *Here's Audacity!* expanded the Bunyan tales in directions not followed by Mr. Felton, is not represented at all. And it is certainly a disappointment that the most distinguished retelling of the Bunyan logging stories yet to be published is not represented either. Louis Untermeyer's *Wonderful Adventures of Paul Bunyan* is mentioned only in the bibliography, where it is evaluated as follows: "Some tales retold." This book is unmistakably superior in style and dramatic organization to any of those represented in Felton's anthology. Alone among the popularizers of Paul Bunyan, Mr. Untermeyer has profited from the ways American fiction was enriched by frontier folktales in the writings of Mark Twain.

Although the anthology includes an apparent diversity of material, reading through its selections in order is a depressing ordeal. Most of the tales are so poorly written, redundant, and devoid of adult interest as to convince almost anyone that if Paul Bunyan literature has fallen to the estate of the nursery, that is only its just desert. Many of the selections were originally written as juvenile literature, but no distinction is made between them and those intended for maturer readers. It's hard to tell which is which.

The collection is seriously weakened as a reference work by a total failure to distinguish between the several varieties of sources it includes. To Mr. Felton, apparently, anything that has ever been written about Paul Bunyan constitutes a Bunyan "legend." Nowhere is there any indication that a Paul Bunyan story slanted for a national magazine is perceptibly different in kind from a recitation taken down from a lumberjack *raconteur*. Instead the material is simply arranged under topical headings: "Paul the Baby and the Boy," "Paul the Man," "Food and the Kitchen," "Paul's Great Inventions," etc. Thus the actual folktales transcribed from lumberjacks by Professors E. C. Beck and H. A. Watt, and from oilriggers by Prof. J. L. Brooks, are scattered among overblown dilutions, distortions, and misrepresentations of "the bardic tradition" by Stevens and the other popularizers. In verse, too, there is the same jumble of *genres*. A stirring ballad from oral tradition is reprinted (on p. 109) from Beck's fine collection; there is also the pedestrian doggerel of T. G. Alvord, Jr. and Douglas Malloch, and the still less distinguished quatrains of the editor. Completely submerged among these folk-type rimes and anecdotes are "Paul's Wife," by Robert Frost, and Part 47 of *The People, Yes* ("Who made Paul Bunyan?"), by Carl Sand-



burg—two of the rare attempts by first-rank artists to make something intelligible out of the disordered mess which now comprises the Paul Bunyan “tradition.”

Characteristic of the confusion evident in this volume is the thirty-two page bibliography appended to the text. This is a slightly enlarged version of a list which appeared several years ago in the *J.A.F.L.* It discriminates between tales, poetry, drama, music, art, and criticism, but within these categories it lists any and all items without prejudice. Although inadequate as a descriptive bibliography, it should prove useful as a finding-list.

*Legends of Paul Bunyan* is clothed in the appurtenances of scholarship but is completely wanting in critical insight. The intelligence which assembled it was that of a cataloguer rather than a scholar. The literary level of most of its contents is so flatly reiterative that even the general reader may find his initial enthusiasm for Paul Bunyan soon bogs down. Confronted by the disorganized mass of Paul Bunyan lore, the editor of this book had a great opportunity to clear the underbrush from the sound timber and impose a critical order upon the superabundance of his material. Mr. Felton lost his opportunity. His collection, while making available some little-known material, presents its entire contents as “legends,” and so perpetuates the common misunderstanding that all the popularizations of Paul Bunyan are valid as folklore. What is worse, I’m afraid he has lost that opportunity to anyone else, since even the present public enthusiasm for folktale books won’t sustain *two* whopping Paul Bunyan anthologies at five dollars a copy!

Dan G. Hoffman

Rutgers University

*Jazz: A People's Music*, by Sidney Finklestein. The Citadel Press, New York, 1948. ix, 274. \$3.00

“This book attempts . . . to place jazz as a part of world music.” Mr. Finklestein offers a corrective to the previous works on jazz. But while he finds Panassié impressionistic, Ramsey and Smith nostalgic, and Coffin and Blesh condescending, the present author bears a disability of his own. Mr. Finklestein is a Marxist, and the things he says about jazz must inevitably be reconciled with dialectical materialism. Marxist aesthetics takes a special interest in the forms of art which spring from communal experience, and those developed among peoples suffering injustice at the hands of other social classes. As the “People’s Music” qualifies on both these scores, jazz offers the Marxist critic a splendid

opportunity to justify the methods his philosophy imposes upon the analysis of art.

Mr. Finklestein has a fine musical sensitivity and a clear prose style. His descriptions of what jazz sounds like are among the best in print. But when he tells us what jazz *is*, the bias of his premises limits the value of his conclusions. His book is shot through with confusing and contradictory passages which dangle the reader between the horns of dialectical requirement and observable fact. But before examining these flaws, let me point out the merits of this book in clarifying the experience of jazz to the noninitiate and the enthusiast alike.

First the author defines that special quality which distinguishes jazz from other contemporary music, and is the basis of its peculiarly powerful appeal:

Jazz reasserts the fact that music is something people do, as well as listen to; that art is not to be limited to a specialized profession, but should be in the possession of everybody. . . . It reveals how deep are the desire and love for music among people, and how great are their creative resources.<sup>1</sup>

As the instruments suggest the outlines of the music, this study is based on the melodic features of jazz, rather than on its rhythms or harmonies. Beginning with the vocal blues, Mr. Finklestein presents the "interplay of opposites" such as "song and speech, on-pitch notes and blue-notes, on-pitch notes and movements to surprising intervals and keys," which are characteristic of instrumental jazz as well. He analyzes the role of each instrument and defines those features of its treatment peculiar to jazz.

The blues melody is the basis of this music. The author describes the blues as a melodic line of intrinsic beauty, capable of infinite variation. The blues is a nondiatonic music, and later infusions into jazz of diatonic, or "sweet," motifs brought into being "a new kind of music," in which the tension between melodic elements based on different scale systems contributed to its emotional power. The "break" and the "riff" are helpfully defined:

The break tends to be the blues at their hottest, most succinct and economical in its note pattern, most blue in its intonation and offbeat in its accent. The riff tends to be the blues at their nearest to sweet, diatonic music, and nearest to the basic beat.<sup>2</sup>

The break is a feature of the hot solo, for which the riff provides "a foundation against which solo melodic voices can soar freely."

<sup>1</sup> Finklestein, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.



In many portions of the book, however, conclusions were apparently arrived at before examination of the evidence. First among the areas of confusion is the relationship of jazz to its folk background. Is jazz a folk music? Was it ever one? These questions inspire a string of contradictions. For Mr. Finklestein, folk music is good music because the people made it. Jazz is good music, and the Negroes made it. But to say that jazz is a folk music implies that the Negroes are a folk. That's bad. Limiting jazz "to what are real or fancied 'folk' practices, no matter what the expressions of admiration that accompanies such limitations," strikes Mr. Finklestein "as a subtle form of Jim-Crow."<sup>3</sup> Though he has only scorn for "the concert hall atmosphere" where the classics are "transformed into an escape to a romantic past world," he prefers to dress jazz in some of the aristocratic trappings of this leisure class music, rather than to describe it in terms of its own practices and antecedents. Thus he insists that composed and improvised music are essentially alike. He grants jazz a pedigree of folk music, but not the tribal music of Africa; it more closely resembles the folk music of Europe.<sup>4</sup> And he sometimes admits, and sometimes denies, the white contributions to jazz. He is so afraid of patronizing the Negroes by calling them a folk that he fails to give them balanced credit for having developed indigenously a vital and flexible musical language from the heritage of their acculturation.

According to Marxist doctrine, art finds its chief function as a weapon in the liberation of society. It is no surprise to read, therefore, that

Jazz is a music of protest against discrimination and Jim Crow. It expresses anger at lynchings and at direct or indirect slavery, resentment of poverty. It expresses the hope and struggle for freedom. . . . Always the Negro musician has this story to tell.<sup>5</sup>

Now jazz is certainly all of these things, yet these are not all the things that contribute to jazz. While we must be reminded that the blues are bitter, that the runaway lover often symbolizes a deeper wrong, this is but a partial explanation of the causes or sources of jazz. The analytical method used here attempts

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25. Another "subtle form of Jim Crow": The title of Duke Ellington's "Echoes of the Jungle" is "deprecatory" to the Negro, an example of the discrimination against which the musicians fight. Delaunay's *Discography* (1948) lists 533 titles recorded by Ellington. Three include the word, "jungle" (although on several other records the orchestra was billed as "The Jungle Band"). What discrimination does exist is certainly bad enough; one need not be this ingenious to find it. One does no service to the Negro or the nation by finding discrimination where it was not intended.

<sup>4</sup> Finklestein, pp. 69, 130.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29; cf. also pp. 54, 149, 226.

to explain a complex artistic process in terms of a 1:1 relationship between the music and only those aspects of social experience which a political theory admits as relevant. Bitter as are the blues, there is much in jazz which is tender without irony, exuberant without sarcasm. In emphasizing this narrow social realism the Marxist critic denies the Negro every passion other than the cry of social protest. This is a sort of discrimination too. And to present jazz as a wholly Negro phenomenon is to ignore the degree of acculturation—musical, at least—which is evident in the music itself.

Marxist doctrine further confuses the author's distinctions between good popular music (jazz) and bad (commercial). He presents jazz as "A People's Music," and also as *the* people's music, giving it a popularity it has never enjoyed except among the Negro and white communities in which it was nurtured as an advanced folk art, and among sophisticated urban aesthetes and cultists. The popular music most Americans accept has never been jazz, but stereotyped dilutions, both strident and saccarine, of the creative, improvisatory music which was the glory of the folk. This type of music the author recognizes for what it is, and rightly places the blame for its barrenness upon

the rise of business to so powerful a force in the making of music that . . . distribution, where the money was invested, became the dominating force, dictating both the form and content of the music. . . . Tune producers no longer depended upon public approval.<sup>6</sup>

Yet this music, which the American people have not hesitated to make their own, is also described as follows: "The beloved American popular music of song and dance is a creation first of the Negro people, and then of Jewish, Irish, Italian and other 'minority' peoples."<sup>7</sup> The critic's ambivalence toward popular culture breaks down his categories and makes his analysis self-contradictory.

In opposing originality to commercialism, Finklestein reiterates the idea that "the thin line of demarcation between improvisation and composition is rapidly disappearing."<sup>8</sup> As melodic line defines the music, he regards the written jazz tune as an important contribution, and takes pains to distinguish "pioneer" jazz writers and arrangers from Tin-Pan-Alley plagiarists. Such importance need not be given to those who composed the "evergreen" tunes, which jazzmen have embellished for years. The melodic material is always common property, and the evergreen is distinguished by its rudimentary simplicity, which permits and

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81; cf. also p. 25.

invites the endless variations. What distinguishes Fats Waller among jazzmen is not that he wrote down the notes for "Honeysuckle Rose," but that everything he played bore the unmistakable vibrancy of his personal talent, blending with or contrasting to the common musical background he shared with the instrumentalists who surrounded him.

Mr. Finklestein's approach to jazz through its melody alone leads him into a misunderstanding of some of the central features of the music. In dismissing the rhythmic approach to jazz, he fails to see how the complexity of African polyrhythms fathered the intricate polyphonic patterns of jazz. The jazz rhythm section grew into its new role of providing the foundation upon which improvisation could be constructed. This foundation also involved the harmonies intrinsic to the melody, be they blue or diatonic, or, as Finklestein suggests, both in contrast.

He dismisses collective improvisation as mere anachronism: since the Negroes no longer live as they did in New Orleans in 1915, they shouldn't play jazz in that manner any more. But they do, and white musicians continue to assimilate their music. These things can't be explained away; one must ask instead, why has collective improvisation lingered? The answer is in the power of the music. Nowhere else is found the dynamic yet delicate balance between cooperation and competition: the simultaneous individual creations, disciplined by a commonly shared background of rhythmic and harmonic assumptions. The primary contribution of the individual is melodic, producing the electrifying polyphony. There are sudden accidentals, unexpected patterns in apparent imbalance, yet always the form emerges in a firm resolution on all three levels of harmony, melody, and rhythm.

Mr. Finklestein feels that the development of the hot solo is an advance over the improvised ensemble, a welcome step away from the folk or primitive characteristics of an earlier stage in Negro culture. Actually the hot solo (Kansas City style, as against New Orleans) allowed for the easy commercialization of jazz, since it encouraged virtuosity and exhibitionism at the expense of musical discipline. These characteristics have been intensified in the emergence of modern jazz, from Louis Armstrong through Roy Eldridge to the current apotheosis of Dizzy Gillespie's bebop trumpet. But Finklestein sees bebop as the culmination of the jazz heritage, and finds in this contrived music a social comment on the treatment of the Negro soldiers during the war.

In his concluding chapter, "The Future of Jazz," Finklestein recognizes that the formal structure of the blues or popular ballad is much too weak to support the degree of musicianship and imagination good jazzmen now bring to their instruments. He feels the answer lies in extending the composition of jazz,

allowing bebop to flex its cacaphonous choruses in the larger arena of the concerto. This is a possibility, but I hope a dim one, for its practice would divorce jazz from the communal discipline which produced its greatest achievements. As S. I. Hayakawa has suggested,<sup>9</sup> jazz fills a special need among urban listeners by combining the directness of folk expression with complex techniques and inventive resourcefulness. If jazz is to extend its resources without losing this power, I think it will have to develop collective improvisation based on a shared musical culture more complex than the long-familiar blues or the vapid popular ballad. Such a music would parallel not the concertos of the romantic composers who seem to be Mr. Finklestein's favorites, but the polyphonic music of the baroque tradition which culminated in the works of Bach.

In these strictly musical matters, however, taste is the final court of appeal, and Mr. Finklestein may be as right as anyone about the shape of jazz to come. His ear is very good, but his sociology is suspect. There has been far too much theorizing about jazz—Marxist, impressionistic, and antiquarian—and not enough responsible study of its ultimate value as music and significance as social document.<sup>10</sup> There still is room for a basic work on this complex, exciting music, which continues to develop under conditions that have made most other folk arts anachronistic or extinct.

Dan G. Hoffman

*Rutgers University*

*The Sky is My Tipi*, edited by Mody C. Boatright. The Texas Folklore Society, Austin, 1949. 243. \$3.50.

Tales of the Kiowa-Apache, collected and recorded by J. Gilbert McAllister, professor of anthropology at the University of Texas, comprise the bulk of this volume of Southwest folklore.

The Kiowa-Apache, a small band of the Kiowa tribe, live today in the vicinity of Apache, Oklahoma. They were a typical Plains Indian tribe: buffalo hunters, tipi-dwellers, horse and travois nomads; with the sun dance, soldier societies and medicine bundles. The author and his wife lived among these people for nearly a year, while gathering data on traditional Kiowa-Apache social struc-

<sup>9</sup> In a lecture given under the auspices of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, at the Arts Club of Chicago, 17 March 1945.

<sup>10</sup> For one comprehensive study of the latter, see Morroe Berger, "Jazz: Resistance to the Diffusion of a Culture-Pattern," *Journal of Negro History*, XXXII, 461-494 (October, 1947).

ture.<sup>1</sup> They became intimately acquainted with members of the group and they shared the daily life of the tribe.

Forty-six Kiowa-Apache tales are presented, prefaced by notes on the personalities of the seven informants. According to the author, the stories "reflect not only a basic cultural pattern, but also to some extent the personality of the narrator as well as the conditions under which they are told." The stories selected are stated to be "fairly representative" of the tales told most frequently. The tales are divided by the author into roughly the following categories: cosmological and origin myths, coyote stories, miscellaneous tales, semi-historical and historical accounts. Stories of religious significance, associated with the Kiowa-Apache medicine bundles, have been excluded.

Although no attempt is made to treat the textual material comparatively, the stories appear to be for the most part characteristic tales of the Plains Indians. The coyote tales are the most numerous. Coyote assumes the role of the culture hero in the origin tales, but more often he is the trickster. The miscellaneous stories include the "twin tale" under the title "Fire Boy and Water Boy," the Orpheus and Euridice theme in "The Ghost Woman," and two stories of human beings married to animals. Many of the stories, according to the author, have been subjected to "rather drastic editing." Repetitions of the narrator were not recorded and pornographic material was omitted. Different versions of the same tale were as a rule excluded, although notes on individual differences are appended to some of the stories.

To a considerable degree the stories reflect Kiowa-Apache economic and social structure. The influence of white culture-contact is thought by the author to be the determining factor in the greater emphasis upon polygyny which appears in comparing the versions of older narrators with those of younger ones.

The final third of the volume consists of tales and lore of the Southwest and rural Mexico collected by a number of contributors. Among these are three Apache tales by J. Frank Dobie, and Hazel Harrod's comparative account of the "sheep-thief motif" as developed from the medieval Latin version, with its various modifications traced throughout North America. A particularly entertaining story, "I Knew Him Well," is a series of anecdotes relating to the life of John Barber, the outlaw, presented by Ruth Hunnicut.

In general, the stories are lively and entertaining, and the collection as pre-

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<sup>1</sup> J. Gilbert McAllister. "Kiowa-Apache Social Organizations," *Social Anthropology of North American Tribes*, University of Chicago Press, pp. 99-169.

sented will appeal more to the ethnographer and the general reader than to the specialist in the folkloristic field.

Blanche G. Watrous

*Highland Park, Illinois*

*Anuario de la sociedad folklórica de México 1945 VI*, edited by Vincente T. Mendoza. Imprenta universitaria, México D. F., 1949. This volume covers pp. 213-408. No price given.

This volume opens with an address by Baltasar Samper, describing the rules laid down for folklore collecting by the organization "Obra del cancionero popular de Cataluña." The procedure is systematic and involves careful questioning of informants regarding origins of songs collected, setting, etc. It is good advice for any collector.

There follows a group of eight songs from Jalisco, set down with music by María Bustos Vargas, prefaced by a brief description of San Nicolas de Ibarra, the town where she learned them from her father and her friends. In her last example, "Pálida, pálida," she finds similarities to Verdi's *Trovador* opera and erroneously accepts this as proof that "the Mexican song which we have accepted as such is derived directly from the *romanza de ópera*." The other songs even of her own group fail to show any such provenience.

The third item in this volume is a magnificent passion play, "El drama de Golgota," from a manuscript by Adalberto Fuentes Cruz, ably edited and annotated by Vincente T. Mendoza. A mimo-drama of the passion of our Savior is subsequently described by Julio Sánchez García.

The volume closes with a study of the owl as an omen of death, five proverbs explained, and a study of the proverb in the novels of Fernández de Lizardi.

The most worthwhile material in the volume is the passion play and the full description of the way it is presented.

Frank Goodwyn

*Northwestern University*

*From Native Roots: A Panorama of Our Regional Drama*, by Felix Sper. The Caxton Printers, Caldwell, Idaho, 1948. 341. \$5.00.

For the most part this book is an expanded descriptive bibliography of plays which the author feels are "rooted" in various sections of the United States.

The primary reason it is not a successful book is that it lacks a precise controlling idea. It defines "regional" plays by saying that in them characters "must be rooted and branched like the natural flora of the region. As eelgrass, live oak, sagebrush, mesquite, redwood, and Oregon pine stem from different acres, so the diverse species of homo derive from different geographic strips. Once this correspondence is established, minor considerations of plot and dialogue become less pressing. In brief, the play must be an honest yet dramatic transcript of the folk as they pass their days on native ground." To indicate its method of selection, in part, the book goes on to say: "The feud between country and city theater will not be fanned in these pages. Let one image suffice to show the basic difference. The regional drama is a sturdy pine on a bank watered by a running stream; the urban play is a painted screen of flowery design set against a fireplace near an armchair under a ticking clock. Consider *Sun-Up* as against *The Philadelphia Story*." But consider "The Death of a Salesman"!

Just what a "regional" play really is never emerges at all. On some pages in the book it seems to be any sort of play set in a particular region. On other pages a "regional" play seems to be almost any rural play; though later the book considers several plays set in cities. Often one almost feels the book considers that a "regional" play must be by a native of the particular section in which the play is set; yet the book discusses, for example, Percy Mackaye's southern mountain pieces.

Except for introductory and concluding sections, and two chapters on plays about Negroes and Indians, each chapter of the book treats plays which have their setting in a particular region: Chapter I, "Yankee Lust"; Chapter II, "Ghosts and Bricks" (the state of New York); and so on through Chapter XIII, "Trail to Oregon"; and Chapter XIV, "Pacific Panorama."

In discussing the plays of these various sections, the book suffers from most of the ailments afflicting the study of American folklore and regionalism: It is often folksy. It frequently patronizes the "folk." It adopts the harmfully loose definition of "folklore" which, as in *The Treasury of New England Folklore*, has reduced the value of many collections and studies. It falls in with the manufactured "folklore" of the *Old Stormalong Yarns* and *Pecos Bill* variety. It now and then plays the role of false naive, in the manner of *Tall Tale America*. And, throughout, it shows a sentimental primitivism based on inadequate understanding of the various regions of the United States and the people who inhabit them.

But the book avoids some of the errors it might have fallen into. It does make clear that the author knows a really bad play when he sees it. And it shows that the author is not taken in by all of the artificially concocted "local"



plays and pageants. The book is an energetic effort to examine its subject and it only suffers because of its loose language and its wholly inadequate criteria for selection, and because of the almost insurmountable difficulties which face anyone who would make a serious study of American regional literature.

Carvel Collins

*Harvard University.*

*Handbook of Early American Advertising Art*, by Clarence P. Hornung. Dover Publications, New York, N. Y., 1949. 160, illus. \$7.50.

There may be some question concerning the aptness of the title of Clarence P. Hornung's new book, but there will be none about its fascination for students of the graphic arts.

In this book, Mr. Hornung presents a representative selection of the vignettes and "stock cuts" that were such a staple item in cut files of nineteenth century printers. These old style wood engravings have been carefully selected and classified as to subject. Many of them are reminiscent of the decorations used until the early part of this century on bill-heads, business cards, posters, etc. Here are engravings of sheep and steers for butchers' stationery, clocks and watches for jewelers', boots and shoes for the cobblers' use.

Also to be found in this "handbook" are genre scenes of the period, showing people in all walks of life, all occupations, dressed in the costumes of the time. Here, too, one finds primitive renderings of factories, industrial scenes, and still life groups.

Altogether there are more than 2,000 illustrations covering practically every phase of American life during the period when our printers were emerging from a slavish imitation of European printing techniques and slowly developing an American style of illustration.

Also included in the book are specimens of some of the type faces that were characteristic of the period. Mr. Hornung seems to have given preference to "horrible examples," for one looks in vain for some of the faces that were current then and are still in vogue to some degree.

Mr. Hornung devotes his introductory text to tracing the history of printing from early Colonial days down to the late nineteenth century. One clearly sees that the author is keenly interested in the development of modern advertising design and that he has spent much time and effort in collecting and organizing his material.

But it is probable that modern practitioners of the advertising art will find



little here of practical value. Present-day advertising techniques, based upon careful researches into psychology, have little in common with the crude wood cuts that were the only illustrations available to most advertisers up to the turn of the century.

However, the *Handbook of Early American Advertising Art* should be a valuable reference work for students and others interested in the printing practices of a bygone day.

Samuel L. Meulendyke

Wilton, Connecticut

*Rosanna's Boys*, by Joseph W. Yoder. The Yoder Publishing Co., Huntingdon, Pa., 1948. xii, 345. \$2.50.

*Rosanna's Boys* is a very strange book, and its author is an even stranger Amishman. Joseph Yoder, whose highly commendable career of service to education must make him very suspect to many of his Amish fellows, has written an odd, formless autobiography that despite its many faults is very enjoyable to anyone and quite valuable to a folklorist. Written in disjointed units, serving the several purposes of autobiography, memorial to his family, and analysis of his co-religionists, the book is unavoidably incoherent. It violates most of the rules of agreement, parallelism, idiom, and punctuation. Spelling errors are not infrequent, and typographical errors abound. Evidently the type was set by a printer who lived in mortal fear of quotation marks, particularly those that end quotations.

Yet I say the book is enjoyable—even charming. For one thing, it is written by a thoroughly modest man, who without pride tells of his struggle to attain education, to escape from the intolerant aspects of his religion, to preserve the traditions of that religion, and to make that religion known and respected by others. For another, its author unconsciously displays a peculiar mixture of philosophy, wisdom, tolerance, and naivete that is very attractive. And above all the book is marked by a sincerity that, even when it dips into the ingenuous and sentimental, will please the reader.

And I repeat the book is of real value to the folklorist. It is not, in the ordinary sense, a scholarly book, although it does contain an amateur's attempt to make an ethnic study of a real ethnic group. Thus in its review of Amish history, of Amish practices ("Old Order" Amish, primarily), of Amish beliefs and standards, and of Amish music, it does present folklore; but, more important, much of it is folklore, unwittingly folklore. There is none of the usual apparatus

(except where the author was consciously a collector) of informant's name, place and date of collection, and so on. All of this is absent for the very good reason that Joseph Yoder is his own informant. The milieu of his information is very clear; its date can be fixed by a little reasoning—usually at the beginning of our century or earlier.

What folklore is here? There are a few proverbs, children's taunts, wise-cracks, folk belief, folk remedies, folk etymologies, and the like. There is one folktale—the pot of gold guarded by a ghost—as well as the Amish explanation of the blue gate legend. Many folk idioms and bits of folk speech (some used unconsciously) appear: to shove the barnyard, to lift a church collection, to rid the table, to throw mark on a telephone pole, to make sale, and others. There are many anecdotes about the Amish, their pacifism, resistance to higher education, pursuit of economic independence, refusal to accept subsidies, rejection of fire insurance, adherence to *Ordnung*, intolerance, honesty, and so on. There are full descriptions of customs: wedding, courtship, house-heating, labor, family relationships, clothing, "party plays," sports, festive menus, to name a few. About a dozen Amish jokes, half of them concerning language difficulties, sprinkle the text. And all of these anecdotes, customs, and the others are given in their real context, so that one has not so many numbered items of folklore but a picture of a homogeneous lore with the folk that foster it.

Although space prohibits mentioning the many other aspects of *Rosanna's Boys*, including the misapprehensions that it quietly corrects, I should report that Indiana's Amish at least are uncertain about Joseph Yoder's books. Such a reaction is understandable in the light of Yoder's stinging rebukes of Amish narrow ways: "... one does not get much credit for anything else one does, if his clothes are not according to Amish pattern"; and "... whether an Amishman is an adulterer or drunkard, or merely uses his tractor for field work, in some churches, the penalty is the same. . . ." Yet this is the report of one who is in his peculiar way devoutly and proudly Amish and who is writing about his own people.

Finally I recommend strongly *Rosanna's Boys* to every folklorist who is interested in the *folk* of folklore.

William Hugh Jansen

University of Kentucky

*Creole Folk Tales*, by Hewitt L. Ballowe. Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1948. xx, 258. \$3.00.

The only great fault with Dr. Ballowe's *Creole Folk Tales* is its title, but

that is a fault of real concern to folklorists. A folk tale is a tale told by the folk over a large area and for a long period of time. And emphatically it is oral: if presented on the written or printed page, it should be presented as nearly as possible in the exact form in which it was told.

Dr. Ballowe's work is literature, quite good literature, and belongs to the school called regional. Like most literature, particularly in its genre, it is based on fact and legend—but to call such a work *folk tales* would justify labeling Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*, a folk tale. At the core of each of Dr. Ballowe's stories may be bits of neighborhood gossip about a wife's revenge upon the wives of her husband's friends, a merchant's thwarted desire to marry a girl much younger than he, and the struggle over the possession of an ornate outhouse; or local legends of residents of unknown background, of trapping a person who tries to capitalize upon superstition; folk explanations of violent deaths caused by lightning and wild animals; an authentic ghost story; and even, I think, one real folk tale in "M'sieu Snake." But these folk elements—local legends and local anecdotes of very limited circulation, for the most part, I would guess—would not merit the title of folk tale. Indeed, in their very artistically embroidered form, they no longer belong to the folk at all but are the exclusive property of Dr. Ballowe.

By careful digging, the folklorist can pry quite a number of small nuggets of folklore out of Dr. Ballowe's narratives. Used to supply local color are folk beliefs about pre-natal markings, laying a ghost, the ways of evil spirits, the vice of literacy, the Black Hand, weather omens, and God's intervention in human affairs; folk customs of marriage, courtship, burial (both Creole and Sicilian), gambling, and social distinction; folk attitudes toward legend, traditions, and religion; a few proverbs and folk sayings; and a plethora of folk speech. Since the narrator is a type of realist, the folklorist can rest in confidence that these ethnic details and others presented are or were authentically Creole. Little else, however, is here for the scholar.

As literature, *Creole Folk Tales* is very enjoyable. Except for occasional subjects, I fail to find the similarity to Maupassant cited in the enthusiastic prefatory blurb. But there is a very real Gallic flavor to the stories, imparted by both material and style. I would tilt at one stylistic device: in an attempt to be folksy, Dr. Ballowe sometimes lapses into a prose—not in his direct discourse, mind you—that combines very literary English, slang, a few French words translated in footnotes, and literal translation of French idioms. So we are told of "the *piquante mourette*, the prick of which gives *le tétanos*, against which the most powerful *remède* of the best *sorcière* is often powerless." Also a "vigilant," "accredited deputy" and a "posse would fix M'sieu's clock." Other peculiarities

are "little-named" (read nicknamed), "force" (i.e. strength), "la-di-da," and "growing like crazy."

I repeat, if you read *Creole Folk Tales* expecting folk tales, you will be disappointed. Read it as regional sketches and you will enjoy it very much.

William Hugh Jansen

*University of Kentucky.*

*The Home Book of Proverbs, Maxims and Familiar Phrases*, by Burton Stevenson. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1948. 2957. \$20.00.

Burton Stevenson's new companion piece to his *The Home Book of Verse*, *The Home Book of Quotations* and *The Home Book of Shakespeare Quotations* is a worthy contribution to the field of collections containing quotations both homely and learned. To state it mildly, this work is a fitting monument to Mr. Stevenson's tireless searching for details and source materials dealing with proverbial elements and wise sayings. As its title suggest, it is definitely a book for the home, and any home with it will be well informed. In addition, it is a work every student of the proverb will find very informative and will want in his personal library.

*The Home Book of Proverbs, Maxims and Familiar Phrases* is an invaluable supplement to such works as *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, E. Cobham Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, *Hoyt's New Cyclopedia of Practical Quotations*, G. L. Apperson's *English Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases*, W. G. Smith's *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* and the many sets of "Familiar Quotations" by numerous other collectors. To be sure, it will not eliminate one's consulting these many varied volumes upon occasion, but it will prove handier than any other single work of this nature in English at present. Mr. Stevenson has now brought considerable worthwhile material under one cover that formerly could only be found by consulting many sources.

Essentially, the present volume is an excellent revision and enlargement of his *The Home Book of Quotations*. The pattern is the same. The material is arranged according to topics as in his *Quotations*. The entries under the various topics are in chronological order. Whenever a well-known saying occurs, it is treated with its variants chronologically and, when possible, comments as to origin and theories of origin are given. An adequate index is provided so that each saying is easily found. Mr. Stevenson uses the first principal word in the expression and gives enough of each expression so as to make the one desired completely recognizable. Thus, one has little difficulty in finding a particular

saying if one knows a key word in it. The learned compiler has attempted only a short bibliography (p. vii). This consists of the famous early important collections of proverbs in English. The running bibliography throughout the body of the work is very well done. Sufficient information is given with each citation, so that the reference cited does not leave one in the dark.

This work differs from the *Quotations* only in that Mr. Stevenson has left out many quotations which were far too long and complex to fall under the classifications of *Proverbs, Maxims and Familiar Phrases*. In their place he has added innumerable examples more in harmony with the title of the book. One is not told, however, which of the entries are *Proverbs, Maxims or Familiar Phrases*. Neither can one tell this from the arrangement. Such decisions must be left to the reader, who must determine for himself how vital such distinctions should be. In addition, Mr. Stevenson has traced many things back to their source, but to say that all the subject matter entered has been traced to its source is erroneous. Such an accomplishment is nigh unto impossible in the life time of one man. As we all well know, someone would always uncover something new, later. In any event, Mr. Stevenson has now provided us with perhaps the largest amount of historical references we have in a single volume to date for material of this nature. Moreover, one will find the portion of our rather familiar phrases and popular expressions treated here to be considerably more inclusive than many works that only list the proverbial materials. It is the best single work of this kind that it has been my privilege to examine or use in the last decade.

The material contained in the book should be of interest to proverb scholars in particular and certainly provides a pleasant source of enlightenment for those who are somewhat less technical. One must not assume that the last word has been said for all the entries commented upon. Very likely, in many instances, only the initial spark has been touched off. Mr. Stevenson to this end could have made profitable use of George Büchmann's *Getzlügelle Worte*, as well as the excellent German and Dutch collections of K. F. W. Wander, *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon* and P. J. Harrebomée, *Spreekwoordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*. Nevertheless, the rich supplementation with references occasionally from the Romance languages, a small number translated from the Chinese, and especially those in Latin and Greek will be welcomed by all. It is an excellent work and will undoubtedly find its way into the hands of a great many people who enjoy knowing a few of the odds and ends about much of our common heritage of "Words of Wisdom." One can honestly say, "They come to be fed, and do *not* go away hungry." Would that more of our proverb scholars had the patience of Burton Stevenson.

One is now moved to wonder, how much different and more exacting the late Professor Morris Palmer Tilley's, yet to be published, work on English proverbs can be?

Stuart A. Gallacher

*Michigan State College*

*The Golden Land. An Anthology of Latin American Folklore in Literature*, by Harriet de Onís. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1948. xviii, 395. \$4.00.

In this unusual anthology, Mrs. de Onís presents a "panoramic view of the culture and beliefs of Spanish America and Brazil." It comprises fifty-four selections from almost that many writers. The work is divided into five sections grouping the selections from the time of the discoverers to the present. The modern period is accorded more space than the others, and the authors are chosen more for their cultural richness than for their literary standing.

Each selection is preceded by a concise accurate sketch of the author presented. The best known among the six discoverers represented is Bernal Díaz, whose *True History* has become a classic. He tells of the fine qualities of Doña Marina, and how useful she was in the conquest of Mexico.

A selection from the *Popol Vuh* introduces the native writers, who in the sixteenth century wrote chronicles in their respective languages or in Spanish. This work, a sort of Mayan Bible, records the customs and traditions of the land of Nayab. It was first written in Quiché. The first great native historian of Peru was the Inca Garcilaso, author of the famous *Royal Commentaries*. He wrote in Spanish, but he knew the language of his Inca mother, and never forgot the native stories and legends he heard in his childhood. Much of what we now know of old Peru, we owe to him.

During the colonial period, and for many years afterwards, literature in Latin America followed closely European patterns. In the middle of the nineteenth century descriptions of local conditions begin to dominate Latin American literature. Good examples are the gaucho poems, *Fausto* and *Martín Fierro*, selections from both of which are included.

The first decade of the present century witnessed what has been termed a rediscovery of the American spirit, a general awakening of national pride and awareness of native cultural values. This is all reflected in contemporary literature, particularly in a galaxy of excellent novels. Examples of some are included in this anthology. Among the authors one of the most noteworthy is Rómulo Gallegos, whose novels dealing with interior Venezuela rank among the best.

The portion devoted to Spanish American closes with three well known Mexican *corridos* or ballads. These direct descendants of the Spanish *romances* are widely used by Mexican minstrels to tell the adventures and final disasters of bandits, bullfighters and revolutionary leaders. These ballads, not limited to Mexico, in their unpolished simplicity, furnish racy records of national events.

The section devoted to Brazil contains selections from six writers, headed by Euclides da Cunha. Of course, this is a meager number to cover the vast and varied Brazilian culture. But a compiler of an anthology, with limited space, must try to strike a proper balance. In the fifty pages devoted to Brazil we have a fine introduction to a literature rich in cultural content.

The *Golden Land* is not an anthology or history of Latin American literature. It is an excellent introduction to its culture through the presentation of many of its outstanding authors and works. They were all chosen with the discrimination of a real connoisseur. The translations too show great skill and literary taste. They should serve as an incentive to read the works in full. Some of the works quoted have already appeared in translation, either by Mrs. de Onís or others. In addition to the merit of the selections themselves, this anthology furnishes a good list and guide of worthy materials available in translation for those unable to read them in their original Spanish or Portuguese.

Agapito Rey

Indiana University

*The Proverb in Goethe*, by J. Alan Pfeffer. King's Crown Press, Columbia University, New York, 1948. 200. \$3.50.

*The Proverb in Goethe* presents primarily an index to the 'proverbs' that Professor J. Alan Pfeffer found in the works of Goethe. He has given us parallels from Wander's *Deutsches Sprichwörterlexikon* and various other sources wherever the author thought "fuller documentation added color and interest to the portrayal" (p. 5). The author followed this scheme because he felt Wander offered sufficient parallels and that it was highly desirable not to make the book too large.

Professor Pfeffer broadly patterned his work after the "collections" referred to by Archer Taylor, *Modern Philology*, XXX, (1932) "An Introductory Bibliography for the Study of Proverbs," 208, as "extremely important aids." He searched single-handedly through two hundred and more volumes to ferret out what seemed to him proverbs. He also frankly admits that a number of them certainly must have escaped his efforts. In addition he points out that his list



does not include: "(a) sayings having a proverbial ring for which commonplace parallels could not be found; (b) sayings which Goethe delimits by an introductory phrase but which otherwise remain unidentified; (c) sayings which are only vaguely suggestive of the proverbs with which they have been associated in the past; and (d) 'proverbial phrases' that have been mistaken for proverbs by Goethe or his annotators," p. 2. What is left, then, should surely be bona fide proverbs.

What is a proverb? Every collector sooner or later has his own definition. Mr. Pfeffer says, "In the present investigation a proverb has been envisaged as human experience and reflection distilled in the form of a lucidly phrased, variable saying. This may be of known or unknown origin and limited or wide prevalence. It must be of broad application and its currency must be attestable," p. 1. In the terms of this definition no sharp distinction is made between adage, apophthegm, aphorism, byword, commonplace, dictum, formula, maxim, paroemion, phrase, saying, saw, truism and proverb when they are properly modified," p. 2.

His "Index," pp. 14-190, catalogues all the above in dictionary form according to the first principal word. They are also cross-referenced in the same manner. The "Appendix," pp. 191-196, contains the listings of the number of 'proverbs' in each of Goethe's various works and the index-number of each 'proverb.' No attempt is made to comment upon any significance the large number of proverbs in one work or another might have. Pages 197-200 contain a "Bibliography of the works cited in the body of the text."

His purpose, apparently, is to supply us with a collection of 'proverbs' in Goethe that no one had done sufficiently well before. Professor Pfeffer hopes that the material brought together within its scope will provide a useful basis for further studies of Goethe's use of the proverb with respect to the development of Goethe's style, both in poetry and in prose, where the rôle of the proverb is especially evident; that one might find problems of a psychological and lexical nature worthy of exploration; that one might investigate Goethe's figures of speech for the relationship to the imagery in proverbs; and finally, that one might be stimulated to study the contiguous fields such as Goethe's use of the proverbial reference, the so-called "incomplete proverb," and the "sententious saying."

Professor Pfeffer has done a lot of work. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how he excluded "proverbial sayings" when, after close scrutiny, one is aware that much of his material is highly debatable as "proverbial" material even according to his own definition. For example, he excludes such expressions as *Vorgegessenes Brot* (pre-eaten bread—don't count your chickens before they are



hatched) and *Er ist aus dem Regen in die Traufe gekommen* (i. e., out of the fryingpan into the fire), but reckons *Die Kraniche des Ibykus* (the cranes of Ibycus—murder will out) and *Alles das ist Vergänglich* (all that is transitory) as "proverbs." The latter he supports with a reference that Wander considers a "proverbial saying." The first two were rejected because Wander "correctly" calls them "proverbial sayings." When is Wander correct, and when not? Other such examples could be cited.

With respect to the "Index" Professor Pfeffer could have helped us a little more had he given the index-number in addition to the cross-referenced word. It would have facilitated the looking up of cross-references and would not have increased the size of the book. For example, after ALLES (p. 15) he says "cf. Eitel, Ende, Geld, Gold, Jugend, Lehre, Neue (das), Prüfen, Reine (der), Sinn, Tod, Uebel, Versuchen, Welt, Wollen, Zeit." Under Geld there are six entries! under Gold five; Jugend six; Tod three; Welt ten and Zeit thirteen. One can easily see the advantage in adding the proper index-number. Then, too, it would have been very helpful had he given the oldest reference along with the Wander reference, since Wander is not the most easily accessible work in this country or elsewhere. The proverb scholar generally likes to know the apparent age of an expression at first 'thumbing.' Annotations are of little help when they are so limited. We have too many hard-to-work-with collections already.

Professor Pfeffer has more than trebled the number of 'proverbs' cited in the article by Herman Henkel, "Sprichwörtliches bei Goethe," *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, XI (1890), Robert Bertin, "Etwas vom Sprichwort bei Goethe," *Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft*, XXIV (1910), 131-132 and Friedrich Seiler, "*Goethe und das deutsche Sprichwort*," *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift*, X (1922), 328-340. In addition to these which he has used, I am sure he would have found Heinrich Schmidt, *Goethe-Lexikon*, (Leipzig, 1912), very useful. This is not a treatment of proverbs, but it contains many expressions fitting Professor Pfeffer's definition. It would have given him a very good start. To be sure, it would not have eliminated his search through the two hundred or more volumes, but it would have helped sharpen the eye for ready perception of fitting material. Professor Pfeffer certainly has done considerable work and has made the problem somewhat more compact for the scholar who wishes to do the job on Goethe once and for all. With Seiler, who wrote the essay above, and with Professor Pfeffer himself (note 14, p. 4), one can still say, "Ueber Goethe gibt es unzählige Schriften, aber die Abhandlung 'Goethe und das deutsche Sprichwort' ist noch nicht geschrieben worden."

Stuart A. Gallacher

Michigan State College

*American Folk Art in Wood, Metal and Stone*, by Jean Lipman. Pantheon Art Portfolios, New York, 1947. 193. \$7.50.

The cultural achievements of Europe have borne heavily on the New World, particularly on the United States and Canada. Accepted usually without question in high places, they have been exploited to the limit elsewhere by promoters and dealers, and even abused by falsifiers. Because of a distorted perspective, they were mistaken for remote and superior, like a Revelation from above. And the arts as a result have been considered exotic. They were divorced from everyday life, and had nothing to do with the activities and skills of the common folk.

Yet nothing could be more misleading. For the creative arts at their source have grown out of traditions that everywhere belonged to the people. Master craftsmen, many of whom associated in guilds, plied their art, trained a few apprentices, and endeavoured to maintain or improve their standards. A few stepped out of the ranks, as soon as opportunities and their talents permitted. They became celebrities, and their towering prestige in the eyes of posterity has tended to make them seem heaven-born. Yet in their day and in the eyes of their contemporaries, they often belonged to the same class as the craftsmen whose work we find in Jean Lipman's admirable book on *American Folk Art*.

The stone cutters producing gravestones, for instance, fell heirs to the master masons who carved statutes and figures in the Gothic temples of the Middle Ages. One of them might have been Solomon Ashley of Deerfield executing the likeness of Colonel Oliver Partridge on an epitaph (Fig. 177). This stylized portrait is impressive, almost modernistic in its abstraction. So are the portraits of Grindall Rawson by William Codner, in 1745 (Fig. 170), and of Mrs. Betheam Moseley (175). "These works belong to 'a timeless, eternal type of portraiture' which has survived time and is 'appropriate for gravestone effigies' (p. 174). The best of them is found on the gravestone of the Holmes children (Fig. 176), in conventionalized style. As the author fitly remarks: "The four profiles, almost identical, form a hieratic repeat design which calls to mind an Egyptian relief. Separated by the symbolic family tree with four broken branches, the 'Four Lovely and promising Sons' are immortalized in stone." Such gravestones also contain lettered inscriptions comparable with the best in the early days of woodblock printing (Figs. 176, 177). They belong to the age of minstrels as illustrated in gravestone inscriptions like:

He has finished catching cod  
And gone to meet his God

or:

Here lies John Luricular

Who in the way of the Lord walked perpendicular

The folk arts here described and illustrated by Jean Lipman are by no means restricted to the stone cutters responsible for the earliest of American portraits. Another carver, like the Indiana farmer named Corbin, about 1850, admirably expressed in a log of wood the inspiration of a man of God—Henry Ward Beecher (Fig. 178). Again to quote the author: "The absolute simplicity of contour and plastic effectiveness make this homely carving a masterpiece of the highest order. It is a specific interpretation of a pioneer American life; and it is also sculpture reduced to its universal common denominator" (p. 178).

What we find throughout this book is sculpture interpreting with simplicity and power early American life, and carving reduced to universal terms and everlasting values. It is bound to bring surprise at home and abroad. One of the most interesting groups consists of figureheads carved out of wood for the clipper ships of New England. These ships plied the seas after the United States became independent. So striking were some of these figurheads that they changed to idols in the South Seas, and totems in Alaska.

The scrimshaw carvings of the whalers of Nantucket, Boston, and Salem, a hundred years ago, so impressed the Eskimos of Hudson Bay and Bering Sea and the Indians of the North Pacific Coast, that they brought about a revival in native arts and fostered the growth of totem poles among the Tsimshyan and the Tlingit. The early argillite carvings of the Haida also at times reproduced early American themes.

How delightful, in this book, it is to hear about the achievements of Henry J. Purrington, of Mattapoiset, "a Massachusetts town proud of its record of building fine whaling ships. Like his father and grandfather, Purrington was trained as a carpenter, and then he turned to ship carving (Fig. 2), being called Henry Carver to distinguish him from the older Purringtons" (p. 31). And the author adds, "Every coast town along the Atlantic seaboard had a thriving shipyard," and "the craft of ship carving was carried on through an apprentice system." These Yankee craftsmen in no way differed essentially from those who long ago, in France and Italy, and even in early French Canada, brought the art of carving to a high level in their day. "Unlike most of the contemporary portrait and figure sculpture of the time," the author writes, "American ship carving was relatively underivative, a fresh and vigorous product of the native tradition in American art" (P. 31). What contemporary portrait in the United States, for instance, compare with "Eunice Adams" carved in wood on the stern of a clipper ship (Fig. 22) or the "Stern carving from Ship American Indian" (Fig. 24)?

The same is true of weathervanes, cut out of metal by itinerant carvers, from the XVIIth century on, who travelled the byways, quite unaware of their gifts as pattern makers. Their repertory was: simple arrows, fish, cocks, Indians, serpents, and grasshoppers (P. 51). Picasso himself, as quoted by Alfred Barr, was moved to say: "Cocks have always been seen, but never as well as in American weather vanes" (P. 55).

The cigar-store figures and other trade signs also contributed, but less impressively, to the repertory of genuine American designs in wood carving. This form of advertising seems to have begun only in the middle of the XIXth century. "After the earliest days of small-scale production by native ship carvers, many Swiss and German woodcarvers who had migrated to America turned to the carving of those Indians" (P. 77).

Circus and carrousel carvings provided another field, limited though it was, for the talents of cabinet-makers and of figure-head carvers. We cannot help but gasp at such a performance as "The Golden Age of Chivalry" (Fig. 93) with its two-headed Dragon—it springs out of mediæval tales, or the "Dolphin Circus Wagon" (Fig. 72).

Toys, decoys, and dolls also contribute their share. And their merit, as underscored by Jean Lipman, is that "the early homemade toys were so simply designed that their makers unconsciously achieved an almost abstract and highly individual style" (P. 117).

All in all, this timely book will help to dispel the false impression about American art, that it has no roots. Sculpture, wood carving in particular, was supposed in high places not to have existed to any marked degree on this side of the Atlantic except in French Canada and Mexico. This misconception was due, no doubt, to the lack of religious carvings such as have been abundantly preserved in the churches north and south of the American border. But we know now beyond dispute that in secular fields the master carvers of New England and Pennsylvania were at all times on a par with their Latin neighbours on this continent. It was only after these folk activities of the past had stopped that the notion came to prevail, as it does now, that art is superior, foreign and costly, within the reach only of the wealthy and the leisurely class. The best antidote for this bias lies in the understanding of the true nature of creative arts wherever they happen, and a deep knowledge of the arts and crafts at home or near home.

A deep appreciation of culture as part of the lives of the people is everywhere in evidence in this unique book of Jean Lipman on *American Folk Art*. It brings up to a universal level the valuable achievement of countless American craftsmen in the past two or three centuries.

The author duly acknowledges her indebtedness to the "Index of American Design, National Gallery of Art," whose files of annotated renderings and photographs of folk sculpture were the cornerstone of this study and whose original photographs and renderings in color were made available for reproduction" (P. 9). And the work is accompanied by a valuable "Bibliography," covering the backgrounds, the general topics, and each one of the special subjects (Pp. 189-193).

Marius Barbeau

*National Museum of Canada*  
Ottawa, Ontario

*American Folk Songs for Children*, by Ruth Crawford Seeger. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1948. 190. \$4.00.

Out of a fourfold capacity as musician, folklorist, parent, and teacher, Mrs. Seeger has here assembled various American folksongs and has shown how they may be used in home or school to enhance the work, play, thought, and speech of young children. This book is an outgrowth of her experience with these same songs at home with her own children and with other groups in a number of schools in and around Washington, D. C. The songs as here proposed for use become an educational tool: the texts, melodies, and rhythms may stimulate the child to self-expression. In other words, the author envisions these songs as a part of the child's daily life; he is to *live* with them and their patterns are to guide his spontaneous reactions to tunes and texts.

Matters pertinent to the use of the book are discussed in a pleasantly informal but authoritative manner in introductory pages. A "chapter" on "Why American Folk Music for Our Children?" sets the pace for the whole book, best summed up in Mrs. Seeger's own words, or, what we may term "Points," as follows: (1) *It [ American Folk music ] belongs to our children; it is an integral part of their cultural heritage;* (2) *it is a bearer of history and custom;* (3) *it gives early experience of democratic attitudes and values;* (4) *it has grown through being needed and used; it has adapted itself frequently to new surroundings;* (5) *it is not "finished" or crystallized; it invites improvisations and creative alertness;* (6) *it has rhythmic vitality; it is the music of motion;* (7) *it invites participation.* These are the principal convictions that support the proposed use of folk songs for children's socialized and dramatic play whether singly or in groups.

Ninety-odd songs selected from the folk-repertoire of different states carry

out the plan. They are mostly singing games, play-party songs, square-dance tunes, patting and jigging songs. The largest number come from Texas, Virginia, and South Carolina. State sources for the songs are given above the notations, and acknowledgments in foregoing pages indicate the publications from which the tunes were taken. Simple accompaniments have been added with chord letters above the staff as an aid to amateur musicians. As a further help, on preliminary pages a schematic diagram is given showing how chords may be varied so as to avoid monotony in "chording."

The tunes—usually one to a page—are followed by suggestions for improvisation, tone play, and so on. For example, after the song, "What shall we do when we all go out?" (p. 59), the children may improvise lines which reflect their daily activities, such as, "We will see-saw up and down," or, "We will climb on the jungle-gym." It is advised that improvisations should come from the child as much as possible; at times, the parent or teacher may join in. In a variation of the Illinois song, "Roll that brown jug down to town" (p. 88), a behavior problem yielded the improvised lines, "Roll that little girl up the stairs," and "Roll that little girl into bed," extremely successful from the child-training standpoint. However, while improvisation from the child is encouraged, the rule is added. Make sure the improvisation of *new* words does not deprive the child of *old* traditional words." [ my italics ]

But is rote memory of traditional text and title enough? In preliminary discussion of American folk songs for our children, much emphasis is placed on its importance as a "cultural heritage," as a "bearer of history and custom," and on other points of a credo mentioned in earlier paragraphs of this review. On account of this emphasis, it would seem natural to *follow through with hints*, even though brief, on these phases of the songs as well as on some of the "changes" and "adaptations" they have undergone to attain their present form. Such little folklore "lessons" would widen the folklore horizon of many a parent or teacher and would give the child more than a playful interest in his heritage of American folk song. Additional remarks of this type would certainly not detract from the unique educational purpose of the book.

The volume is throughout attractive with colorful cover jacket and plentiful illustrations by Barbara Cooney. Multiple indexes and wide margins convenient for useful annotations increase its value. Fine paper, clear print, and varied type faces add much to its appeal. The spirit of the book and the enthusiasm of its maker are implied on the back cover-jacket where Mrs. Seeger and her charges are seen in action.

Grace Partridge Smith

Washington, D. C.

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